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CIRCASSIAN MAIDENS.

JOURNAL

OF A

RESIDENCE IN CIRCASSIA

DURING THE YEARS 1837, 1838 AND 1839.

BY

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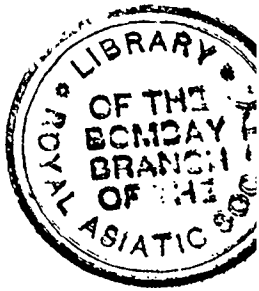
JAMES STANISLAUS BELL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



"Non si debbe mai lasciar seguire un disordine per fuggire una guerra, perchè ella non si fugge, ma si differisce a tuo disavvantaggio."—IL PRINCIPE.

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NARRATIVE

OF A

RESIDENCE IN CIRCASSIA.

LETTER XIX.

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SASHE, *April 20th*, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. To-day, about mid-day, cannon having been heard close at hand, I went to the top of a hill at a little distance, which commands a view of the sea, to ascertain what was going forward; but this the lofty beech-wood prevented, and the interest increasing with the continuance of the firing there was nothing for it but to make the best of my way—slipshod as I was—through that rugged forest down to the shore at the entrance of the glen of the Psekha, where I arrived, bathed in perspiration, in about fifteen minutes, and found the object of attack was a small Turkish craft from Trebizond—the enemy a steamer. The former had arrived early in the morning, and, having been anchored at a short distance from the beach instead

of being immediately hauled up, was obliged to cut from her moorings and run on shore, when the steamer hove in sight. About a hundred and fifty natives had manned the fortifications at the landing-place, with Ali Akhmet at their head. Among the most active was Shekir Efendi, a white-bearded Turkish mollah of this district; and there were present and armed for action, two or three other old men, whose appearance made me think them centenarians, or nearly so. The steamer fired some dozen shots (twelve-pounders I think), which were made prizes of by the assembled Circassians, and then sheered off without coming within range of their rifles.

Two of the shots unfortunately struck the Turkish craft, just below her water-mark, so that almost the whole of her 300 kilos of salt—which formed her entire cargo—was destroyed before we could get her hauled up on the beach by a windlass. The crew say they fell in with seven other Russian vessels, and got away from them all without mischief!

But what may be deemed most interesting by you at home, was the circumstance of my expecting English shipping on the coast having become already so widely known among the people, and being so eagerly desired by them, that upon the steamer being discovered, the report spread like light over the country, that the English ship had arrived, and very many females (my host here says he saw about a hundred) issued from their hamlets, dancing and singing with joy, to receive the welcome strangers! The hostile thunderings soon broke the delusion. I leave their mortification—and mine—to your imagination.

This and the two neighbouring districts are noted for the chastity of the inhabitants; or, at all events, for their severe regulations regarding the intercourse of the sexes. So far as I have heard, this cannot in general be reckoned among Circassian virtues; nothing, however, of a contrary nature is observable on the surface of society.

21*st*.—It is a year to-day since I arrived in this country, and the anniversary has been a day of excitement—spent in attending a meeting of from 4 to 500 people, among whom were all the leading men of the neighbourhood. The place of assembly was the plateau of Mamaï, and the object, the discussion of what places it would be advisable to fortify further against the expected attack of the Russians. I attended merely as a spectator, and mentioned to Hassan Bey that I should be glad to subscribe a couple of oxen (if he thought they would be accepted) for the entertainment of the men who might work at the fortifications. I was gratified to hear him express his opinion that the offer might give offence, as each man considered it his duty to contribute what was necessary. I was still further gratified by witnessing the reconciliation of a feud, as a preparation for acting in concert against the common enemy. The Koran, which had been brought for the purpose of an oath to that effect being administered, was about to be suspended on two rifle-rests, when the aggrieved party declared that an oath was unnecessary; and, instead of it, there was a striking of hands in the presence of the Tamatas. A proposition was then made by *Zeûx* Tosnakûl—a very jolly English-looking person—that if a supply of

powder should arrive (as I had previously told some of the chiefs might be the case), each household should be bound to contribute so much, in order that it might be immediately bought up for the common good. He added, that it would be well for them to subscribe and purchase some cannons also, when some one objecting that they had no cannoneers, my dragoman adroitly suggested to a chief, who stood beside him, that there were *Poles* enough to be found for that purpose, which was intimated to the assembly, and both propositions seemed to meet general assent.

Khissa, 23rd.—On Saturday Hassan Bey took me to a hamlet on the east side of the valley of Sashe, as the first stage on an excursion along the coast to the southward. The excursion has been interrupted by a disagreeable affair, which I shall soon explain; but I have, nevertheless, had an opportunity of forming some idea of the beauty and extent of that valley. It is five or six miles long, by about one broad, with gentle hills on each side, and is closed in towards the north by high mountains. A large clear stream meanders through it, bordered by rich level meadows, now beginning to look bright with wild flowers, and graced still further by numerous fruit-trees—apples, pear, and walnut, some of the latter of which are of the stateliest growth I have ever seen. But I was most struck with a hill on the western side, which was for about a mile almost one continuous vineyard, such as I have already described more than once—standard trees, each with an enormous vine entwined around it. This vineyard, like the rest, is unenclosed, and possessed in common by the

G. Barnard lith. from a Sketch by Jas. Stanislaus Bell, Esq.

Jas. Kieghel Lith.r to the Queen

VALLEY OF SASHE.

neighbours. Along the middle of the valley are scattered many large hamlets, and many more lurk among the beautifully-wooded hills that environ it, while its entrance from the shore is so far secured by there having been left there a broad mural barrier of the ancient forest. The whole scene appeared one of surpassing rural beauty, happiness, and plenty; and the only thing that diminished my pleasure in surveying it was the apprehension that unless the cannonless natives can defend its entrance it may soon be swept with the besom of destruction.

And now for the tale of my annoyance: it came at first with a fair aspect. While at the hamlet I have mentioned, a servant of Nadir Bey's dragoman arrived from Agûïa to tell me that a ship or ships had arrived for me at Constantinople, and that letters addressed to me had come to Shapsekwa; but that the Turkish captain who brought the letters would not deliver them except into my own hands, as he expected to be well rewarded. This agreeable intelligence, which made me leap from my seat, was immediately damped by the sequel. One of the Zazi-okûs had brought the news, and another had arrived after him to bully the dragoman for money instead of goods, in payment of a horse (palmed upon Nadir Bey at an extravagant price) and some other things alleged to be owing them, which money the servant requested me if possible to procure. The messenger added that the members of that cunning, bad family (as I have now discovered them to be) were loud in their denunciations against all of us, and had endeavoured to promulgate an opinion that it would be wrong to allow the dragoman to carry

off a large packet of letters I had entrusted him with, as they might contain matter dangerous to the country. I began therefore to suspect that the message about letters which I must go all the way to Shapsekwa to get, was a mere *ruse* to tempt me to return immediately to the north.

I communicated this suspicion to Hassan Bey, and my determination not to return till I had finished all I came here to do; and I presume he took measures accordingly, for, after an early repast, we proceeded to a hillock near the sea, where, soon after our arrival, Ali Achmet Bey, Hadji Dakhûm-okû, and other seniors assembled, to whom the whole was communicated.

The Hadji, a tall graceful old man, with keen restless grey eyes, and who is said to be at the head of all affairs in this part of the country, was the principal spokesman in reply. He recapitulated—repetition being a sad habit among Circassians—all that had occurred in the case of Nadir Bey at Waïa, his illness, his importation of ammunition for the benefit of the country, its distribution, his departure for the north "like the rest of his countrymen who had visited them, as if that were the seat of government," &c.; and then he added, "We have heard of the great good you have done there, and the liberality you have exercised, but in this respect there is no wish here to receive anything from you, to whom, on the contrary, it would be more becoming that we should be donors. In regard to the reports now endeavoured to be promulgated against you, we attach not the slightest credit to them, and shall be exceedingly happy that you remain among us, in which

case you shall be at perfect liberty to go where you please, and to quit the country when you think proper."

After I had replied to these civilities, he arranged with the rest that some person should be sent to Agûïa on their part, to communicate to the people the conviction entertained here of our integrity, and to prevent the Zazi-okûs from taking any strong measures against Nadir Bey's dragoman, or in impeding the despatch of our letters; and, if necessary, to offer the security of the chiefs that their just claims should be duly settled. At the same time the Hadji begged of Hassan Bey and me that we should endeavour to procure the money they demanded, instead of goods, as it would be a pity to run the risk of causing dissension by such an affair. The Bey has consequently done his utmost to procure 800 piastres—all that is still due—but without effect; for the only individual in this part of the country who, so far as I can learn, possesses any money at all, wishes to turn his 100 silver roubles (worth here 1500 piastres) to most exorbitant advantage, by having for them a female serf of five spans, (which form the standard in place of years in purchasing young persons,) giving for her, along with his money, five goats (worth 100 piastres), and a year's credit! He would thus be a gainer of about 2400 piastres, the value of such a girl being three to four thousand piastres, according to her beauty. I must therefore hope that the Zazi-okûs may be brought to reason, and take goods in place of money; or hold the former till the dragoman can return from Constantinople (as he purposes doing) with the latter. It may thus be seen that I have the

prospect, when I go northward, of fishing in very troubled waters, which perhaps something done from abroad alone can calm.

I have already told you of the civil way in which the governor of Anapa communicated his wish to make prisoners of us. I am sorry to say that the wish of his superior officer, the Baron Rosen, Commander-in-chief of the Imperial Army of the Caucasus, regarding us was not expressed in such gentle terms. He said to one or other of those envoys who were at Sûkûm-kaleh last summer, (as I have just been told, in proof of the conviction that we are true friends of the country,) that it would be well for the Circassians if they would "*cut these English in pieces ;*" saying further: "Make but the trial of putting them to death, and saying the Russians did it, to see if their government will interfere, as I tell you it will not; for it is completely under our management, and we treat it as a child, making it do whatever we think proper."

My expedition southward has been deferred by the necessity of inquiring after money, of writing more at length by the dragoman, and sending him more goods, in case of further difficulty. When it may be resumed, I know not, as this must depend on the movements of the enemy.

Last year a large Greek transport, with provisions for the Russians, was captured off this échelle, by the boats belonging to the inhabitants, two of which are about thirty feet long. Some were for retaining and selling her in Turkey; but the majority determined on her destruction. She was therefore burned; in effecting which, I am sorry to say, nine lives were

lost, owing to the immensity of the multitude assembled.

24th.—Much cannon-firing has been heard from the south; and yesterday, while we were still speculating upon its cause, a person arrived with the unwelcome news that five or six large Russian men-of-war had arrived and cast anchor off Sashe, and that many others were seen to sea-ward. So unexpected was this very early visit, that among the nineteen guests who supped and slept here last night, were some from that valley. After supper, that is about midnight, to which time, amid smoking and drinking, our convivial and most hospitable landlord generally prolongs this repast; and just as our beds had been made, our arrangements for the night were suspended by the war-cry (which is accompanied by discharges of fire-arms) from the valley above which this hamlet stands. The idea appeared to be that the *Ghiaour* was preparing to land, and our host and another person immediately got their horses and set forth to learn the truth, and to spread the alarm in the next valley to the northward, which is the duty of the former as chief, while we lay down dressed and armed, and prepared for a start if necessary. But I for one shifted the scene from the real to the unreal world, and with day-break awoke from visions of storms and fights to learn that the alarm and war-cry were occasioned by the dispositions of the enemy at Sashe, though some ships had menaced this échelle also during the night. This intelligence was communicated in a similar manner, according to custom, for a considerable distance along the coast.

Some of the fifteen ships that arrived off Sashe are

now seen cruising on the coast here; and although the whole population is on the alert to encounter this storm of war, no one yet knows whither its first fury may be directed.

April 27th.—The morning of the 25th dawned beautifully: light, fleecy clouds betokened its serenity, and a gentle breeze from the west cast but a ripple on the sea-beach.

To this loveliness of nature the bay of Mamaï presented a dismal contrast. Its waters were darkened by a host of war-ships, while its forests glistened with the bright arms of innumerable warriors. But before entering upon the strife that ensued here, I must describe the localities somewhat in detail.

The bay of Mamaï or Sashe, as seen from its north-western cape which projects furthest into the sea, forms a deep and considerable sweep, on the south side of which is the embouchure of the river and entrance of the valley of Sashe, and on the north the small plateau of Mamaï or Psekha, distant from each other more than two cannon-shots: the space between these extreme points is undulating, rugged, and high ground covered with a magnificent forest of beeches and oaks, and gradually declining towards the south-east, where the Sashe enters the sea. The northern cape is formed of high and steep hills, the other is also steep though much less elevated, and clothed with forest. The water throughout the bay is deep to within a very short distance from the shore. It will thus be seen that though the best shelter for ships is off Mamaï, that locality is by no means eligible as the site of a fort; because it is so closely commanded by heights around, that the garrison could easily be

picked off by the rifles of the natives. The mouth of the river and the southern cape are also commanded by heights in their immediate vicinity, but not so closely: these therefore were the points at which the descent of the enemy was most to be apprehended, as I told two of the chiefs, and as the result has proved. Both localities had been fortified by fosses faced with felled trees or hurdle-work filled with turf and stones, but Mamaï, as being the chief resort of the Turkish traders, much the most sedulously.

On the 24th the squadron anchored off the mouth of the Sashe, and immediately commenced a heavy cannonade; but on the following day, the commander seemed to have determined on a *ruse*, to the success of which, I am sorry to say, his steamers and the treacherous wind contributed. He moved the whole squadron opposite Mamaï, against the plateau and surrounding heights of which were ranged a line consisting of eight three-deckers and heavily armed frigates, at about half cannon-range from the shore; while beyond them lay the corvettes, gun-brigs, transports, &c., which formed the rest of the force, amounting in all to about thirty sail.

At 8 A.M. the battle began, and for the two succeeding hours the artillery of the shipping poured so heavy a fire upon Mamaï, and its neighbouring heights, that the Circassians, never doubting their fortifications there were about to be stormed, mustered their entire force to defend them, seeking such shelter only as the inequalities of the ground afforded. During this time the boats were manned on the off-side of the shipping, (the heavy firing of which concealed the operation,) and having put off and

rowed rapidly, they had arrived at the mouth of the river, and there debarked a strong detachment and some artillery, before 200 to 300 of the most brave and active of the Circassians, after having traversed the rugged forest,—for the beach was rendered impassable by the cannonade of the shipping—and forded the river, had arrived to attack them, as they did the moment they came up, by rushing among the Russians sabre in hand. But the desperate effort of this heroic little band proved, as usual, little else than a sacrifice of the bravest and best; for although they cut down about 150 of the enemy, and bore off twenty of them prisoners, together with three pieces of cannon, yet the Russians retained possession of the level ground they had formed upon. About seventy or eighty of the nobles and persons of most influence among the Circassians, besides others of less note, were killed and wounded in this action and in the previous cannonade, amounting in all to between 300 and 400. The two largest cannons captured had to be abandoned, as being too heavy to be borne off over rugged ground in face of the enemy. They were thrown into a ditch or hole, and have possibly since been recovered by the Russians, who have such a terror of the Circassians becoming possessed of any thing of that sort,* that when deputies came to the camp next day to demand the bodies of the slain, they endeavoured to persuade them to return the cannons captured, as things of more harm than use to them, seeing they would burst them by not knowing the proper charges of powder!

* See St. Petersburgh Gazette, *Re* "Vixen."

G. Barnard, lith. from a Sketch by Jas. Stanislaus Bell, Esqr.

Day & Haghe Lith.rs to the Queen.

RUSSIAN CAMP AT SASHE.

I think the Russians would not have been able to effect their landing, but for their *ruse;* as the Circassian force assembled was very large, and animated by the best spirit. So soon as they had made their footing good, they took up such positions in the level centre of the valley and on the verge of the southern acclivity, as enabled them not only to defend their main body from further attack, but to cover effectually the debarkation of the remainder of their artillery and ammunition. But the hills and dense forests on both sides of them were occupied by their opponents, who lost no opportunity to gall their outposts, and to prove to them that the cutting down the forest on the southern eminence shall be dearly paid for. The Russians set to work on this undertaking almost immediately after their landing was completed. Their whole force might amount to about eight thousand men; that of the Circassians—then and so suddenly assembled—to about half that number.

I have had to shift from the large, commodious guest-house here, to a very small chamber within the farm-yard, in order to make room, and show respect, for a wounded man, one of three brothers, our neighbours, who suffered in the action of the 25th at Sashe. All three were among the foremost in the charge at the mouth of the river, where one was killed, and the other two wounded. Other three brothers of this valley were killed, and many more of our neighbours have been either killed or wounded. My Turkish *Murat* was among the gallant band who attacked the Russians while forming.

28*th*.—A person from Besni states that almost the whole Russian force on the upper portion of the Kûban has been withdrawn, and marched towards the sea; and that it is inferred there that hostilities on a large scale are to be carried on against the coast this season. The news from Shapsuk make us presume that the establishment of a military colony is about to be attempted in the neighbourhood of the Abûn, as very many families and immense supplies of provisions have been escorted to the fort there.

Sass and his army are said to have arrived at Anapa—if so, the women and children in that neighbourhood must be in danger.

An incident has occurred which shows that my position is somewhat critical at present. I happened to be on the sea-beach at the entrance of this valley, attended by my Polish servant only, and as I sat on a rock giving way to the current of melancholy reflections, excited by the unequal contest my friends were engaged in, and occasionally looking eagerly, though with little hope, to see if an English sail would gladden the horizon, a horseman stopped to address my Pole, who stood at a short distance, and I soon saw, by the gestures and expressions of the former, that what passed was not of a friendly nature. Two or three others came up, to whom I saw a reference made as to me by the other, when my man in the few words of French he has picked up, said, "*Allons, monsieur, allons, beaucoup de Tcherkesses*," implying that others he had seen were coming. But I judged it best under the circumstances to sit still and look indifferent (inspect-

ing, however, at the same time, the trigger of my pistol) and after a short debate my foe and his friends departed, and left me to cool in the Black Sea my ire at such treatment. I learned, as I had supposed, that the first mentioned person,—after ascertaining who I was and where I lived—had been violent in his denunciation of what he was pleased to call my sitting there enjoying the disasters of his countrymen; saying further, that he had been at Constantinople, and learned that the English were not to be depended upon—that for his part he believed I had been the cause of the Russians coming here; and he concluded with a declaration that if I had not been the guest of Hassan Bey, he would have shot me. This incident, originating perhaps in the denunciations Shamuz uttered against me, proves that I must be cautious at present; for the people, or a portion of them, are in some degree maddened by their increasing disasters, and in such a temper, and until I have given further proof of our friendship for them, they may easily listen to those who put, as the individual in question, the most distorted and exaggerated constructions upon our conduct. Yet it is some time since I have come to the conclusion, that the "bark is worse than the bite" of many of these Circassians; for this is a free country, (somewhat licentiously free,) and the tongue is the member which proceeds to greatest extremities when uncontrolled.

1*st May*.—During March there were six days on which we had rain, and in April seven; the rest of the two months having been beautiful. In February

and the beginning of March there were some stormy winds, as well as on the 2nd and 3rd of April, on which last days the winds from the southward and westward were the nearest approximation to gales. Now the weather is perfectly delicious, and the hills and valleys are covered with the brightest verdure. Yesterday the thermometer stood in the shade at noon at 79½°, the greatest heat we have yet had.

My time in future ought not to hang heavily on my hands, as in addition to the advice, visits and medicine demanded by very many others, the wounded man brought here has put himself entirely under my charge. I find I have here to combat the same prejudice as in the north. Parties of his friends, female as well as male, assemble to entertain him at night with music, tales, and buffoonery. I have endeavoured to persuade him that quietness is best, as he had some fever for two or three days; but he is unwilling to forego the *privilege* of his condition, and argues that he sleeps best after the music. My hostess, and a tall handsome girl who came to visit this man, are gone to-day to Sashe to visit the atalik of the daughter of the former, a noble who was wounded, as were many others on the 25th, by the arm of a tree falling on him in the forest, where they awaited the landing of the Russians.

This custom of females visiting the wounded men is universal, and shows, at all events, a kindliness of feeling among the people. The visit of the bright-eyed maidens to the young wounded warriors must contribute greatly to the diffusion of courage. I have repeatedly seen two of these maidens, one of them the

sister of Hassan Bey, sitting by the couch of my patient, fanning and paying him other delicate attentions, among others that of combing or *otherwise cleaning* the tuft of hair on the apex of the head, generally worn by young men.

I did not intend acting as surgeon to this man; but he was so delighted with the effects of some medicine I gave him at first, that he immediately discharged the member of the faculty he had called in, and *then* begged me to act in his place. He will thus be saved some hundred piastres for curing his legs, both of which have been wounded by a musket-ball.

The Azras in the Russian service at Sashe have contrived to let the people know that the Russians are preparing to make forays by night, for the purpose of taking prisoners; and in consequence of this information extra guards are already placed all along the coast, and the inhabitants nearest the enemy are removing their families and effects to a greater distance.

May 2nd.—We have had the war-cry here again from the northward, in consequence of several large Russian men-of-war having approached very near Sûbesh, and remained there for some time, while many others were seen in the offing; but it proved a false alarm, as they have all departed without undertaking anything.

Some friends have been here to-day to induce my patient—who is a merchant—to make his testament; although his life, as I told him, is in no more danger than mine. It is the custom for those, at least, who are in partnership as he is, to do so.

The zealots in religion, many of whom seek here, as in other countries, to distinguish themselves rather by the outward observances than the internal influence of their faith, will not defile their lips with a drop of pure wine; yet many of them drink glass for glass with the others of a nauseous fermented preparation of honey and grape syrup, which I have repeatedly seen blaze in the fire like the strongest wine; native brandy, too, they drink quite as freely.

3rd.—We have just learned that the Russian commander at Sashe has written to the Circassians, earnestly urging them to make peace (alias, submit quietly to become slaves); but I hope yet to get a copy of the original, and shall not therefore mar its beauty by an abridgment of what I have heard. I hope also the people will take a just view of the advances of this military Judas, to which I shall, if possible, help them.

I could scarcely believe, were I not well assured, that those Azras and Georgians who serve with the Russians received each *daily*, at first, about thirty piastres (six shillings), while it is well known that the Russians are allowed as pay only about thirty piastres for every four months, and the most wretched diet; that half of their pay is reserved for clothing, and that the whole of the remainder has to be expended by them for flints, soap, barber's fees, priest's fees, &c. &c. The former rate of pay would soon, however, empty a Russian military chest, if many were quartered upon it; it has therefore been discontinued, or only promised, which is much the same.

7th.—On hearing of the Russian general's letter

to the Circassians, I expressed a wish to go and counsel them as to their reply—chiefly in regard to Russia's furtive treaties with the Padisha, the nature of which cannot be known to the people of Sashe. Next day, however, word arrived that they had learned (I know not how) that I was disposed to write an answer for them, (an affair, apparently, they don't like to be bothered with,) and requesting earnestly that I would do so. The messenger said he had been aroused from his bed, and requested to go quickly. I set out on the 5th, accompanied by Hassan Bey, a Turkish scribe, and others. We crossed the valley to some hills immediately in front of the Russian camp, where, after sitting some time on the grass with a few others assembled there, Hadji Dakhûm-okû and several large parties arrived, and formed a meeting, in which the letter of the Russian general was again read, and I found that the greater portion of it was a tirade against the English. It was given me to answer; and after a short exhortation from the Hadji for more of the people to assemble at some point where there was a good opportunity of killing some of the Russians—two of whom he had just disposed of in this manner—we separated; they to bivouack in the woods or deserted hamlets, and our party for a hamlet on the hills above Mamaï, of which possession is yet retained.

Next day I met the chiefs and people again in a lovely portion of the valley—a richly enamelled meadow shaded here and there with magnificent walnut-trees, now covered with luxuriant foliage, and bordered on one side by the long enclosures of a

hamlet. We were not a cannon's shot distance from the verge of the camp (though concealed from it), so that our debate was accompanied every now and then by the reports of a field-piece, or of the musketry of the outposts, from which the Hadji, who presides in everything here, whether warlike or civil, arrived after some little delay, with many other seniors and attendants, forming altogether a congress of about 200 persons. The answer, which I had partly suggested, was immediately read and as promptly approved of, when I stated to them shortly, that if it had been I who counselled war, while they were inclined for peace, I should have had difficulty as to the answer; but that I had found none, because during the whole time that I had been in the country, and all the journeying I had made through it, I had never yet heard one individual speak of peace; that they had but to continue to act as they did at present, in which case good results might shortly be expected. "If you had advised peace, we would not have listened to you," was the short and pithy reply of the Hadji; after which he rose and begged I would lend him my Polish servant to serve the small cannon they had taken, along with two Russian deserters who had promised to do so. Liberty being given to the Pole to go if he pleased and readily accepted by him, away these quondam Russian subjects went with the Hadji and others to prepare an embankment on the northern side of the river; and the congress was immediately dissolved.

The influence of this old Hadji is in part derived from his restless activity, which is occupied in endless

devices for exciting his countrymen, and destroying their invaders. Among these devices he had planned surprising the camp by simultaneous attacks at three or four different places, of which it is supposed the enemy had got notice; for this morning early, three battalions sallied forth to attack a small body of Circassians, posted on the side of a hill which rises at a short distance from the eastern side of the camp. The Georgians were placed in the van, as they had been at the landing, and the Circassians were taken somewhat at unawares; yet they charged down the hill to the number of 150 to 200, sabre in hand, and with such fury that the Russian force was obliged to retreat; and although its artillery was then brought to bear, it produced no effect, for the Circassians pursued their advantage to the very verge of the camp. They lost forty or fifty of their bravest warriors, but it may be presumed that the enemy suffered at least in proportion. Many valuable Georgian rifles and other accoutrements fell into the hands of the Circassians; among these I saw an ancient Georgian sabre, much ornamented on the hilt and sheath with silver. A Georgian is spoken of as having shown great bravery and swordsmanship; would that it had been in a better cause! But fighting appears so natural to men, that it seems not to be difficult to induce them, as in this instance, to fight even against themselves; for, if the Russians should conquer this country, the sun of Georgia is set for ever.

8*th*.—Great changes are observable since my first visit this year to the valley of Sashe; its native

beauties are now matured by the greater verdure and maturity of the herbage and foliage; but its hamlets are deserted, and cheering wreaths of blue smoke no longer announce their happy homes; women and merry children are nowhere to be seen, and in place of these I saw youths amusing themselves in bowling cannon-balls, and across a field in a branch of the valley I saw a fine large fox, leisurely trotting, as if aware that his former enemies were displaced.

9th.—My Pole returned yesterday evening. There had been little cannon-firing on the part of the Circassians, who found the charges too heavy a contribution from the small stock of powder possessed by each! but he says, on the hill to the north of the river, they have a most secure embankment, whence the whole camp, and even the supposed site of the fort, can be commanded—thus proving again that all the Circassians require to rid themselves of their invaders are a few cannons, and a supply of ammunition for them.

He witnessed the morning attack of the Russians, and says, it was most gallantly repelled (a brave Pole, as Stanislav is, should be a good judge) by not above the fourth or fifth of the number of the Circassians, who pursued their assailants, as I have said, to the camp. He left the field because proceedings were almost suspended in consequence of the Hadji and most of the other persons of influence having suddenly departed southward to get some individuals tried and punished, who have been detected stealing and trading with the Russians at Ghagra.

The messenger, who took the Circassian letter

says, that the Russian general offers to give any one, who will deliver me into his hands, 2000 silver roubles, and for my dragoman he offers half that amount, (we have thus now—my man and I—some idea of our market value;) adding, that if the Circassians fear he will not keep his word, he is ready, on their giving theirs for the due delivery of us into his hands, to pay the money beforehand. He gave the messenger a lecture also on the folly of his countrymen trusting in any degree to England, which never could or would do anything for them. He kept him, moreover, all night, urgently desired him to accept some presents, and was careful to impress upon him that the person who wrote the letter for the Circassians, "whether it were the Englishman or his dragoman," was remarkably ignorant, knew nothing whatever of politics, and had disgraced them by such a production on their part. It may be so, yet, on my part, I am surprised that the Russians, who pique themselves—and deservedly—on their being politicians, should give the Circassians so very little credit for common sense as not to suppose that these their repeated endeavours to depreciate us must have the contrary effect. In fact—and as has been shown—such has been the case, and I remain their grateful debtor for an essential service.

Hassan Bey says he once thought anxiously—as he sees I do, to the detriment of my health; but he became convinced of the folly of it, and determined that himself and his friends should enjoy the benefit of what wealth he has, as he knows he cannot take it with him to the next world, and that there he shall be

neither "banker, treasurer, nor merchant." He seemed to tell with pride of the presents he received to-day from an individual; viz. a good horse, an excellent ox, and two horse-loads of wine. "What benefit," said I, "as I presume you are expected to give much more in return?" "I know that—" replied my practical philosopher—"I shall have to give him perhaps double; but not for a year or so, and in the mean time I can enjoy his gifts." A circulation of both wealth and friendship is thus kept up here, which Hassan Bey used to extend into the neighbourhood of Sûkûm; but the present invasion, and still more his reception of me, have put a stop to that, for he says he cannot again go there.

10*th*.—There is, it appears, a great debate at Sashe about removing some ancient crosses, of which there are three particularly noted—one pendent from a tree and two erect—besides several others of iron, as these are, and some gilt. The people, in general, wish them removed for fear they should fall into the hands of the Russians, who might thereupon found some claim to the country, as having been originally Christian; while the chief, Ali Achmet Bey—who drinks wine abundantly, has never been known to say Mussulman prayers, and is suspected of a bias to the ancient faith of the country—protests against the profanation—by removal—of these relics of their forefathers; prefers defending them where they are, and claims the right of ordering that they shall be left intact.

LETTER XX.

CONTINUANCE OF WARLIKE OPERATIONS—MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS—THE RUSSIANS EFFECT A LANDING AT TOAPSE—SHAMUZ' REPENTANCE—BOX-WOOD—MEDICAL TREATMENT OF THE WOUNDED IN CIRCASSIA—TRAGICAL INCIDENT—PRICE OF A WIFE—SURGEON'S FEE.

KHISSA, 11*th May* 1838.

MY DEAR ——. A great muster from every glen along the coast to the south of Waia, with provisions for a fortnight, is now making with a view to strike a decisive blow against the Russians. My host, who formerly proved his courage on all occasions, has within this year or two abstained from taking part in the hostilities on account of remonstrances from his brothers, Hafiz Pacha and two others, in the Sultan's service, who argue that as their family is subject to the Sultan, and the Sultan is at peace with Russia, his continuing to aid the Circassians may compromise them. As might have been expected, evil surmises have been excited by such conduct among his more zealous neighbours, and have stung his son, a stout lively boy of about twelve, into a determination to make for himself an independent reputation. On the occasion of the present muster, after alluding to these reports against his father, he helped himself to a horse, and left the house of his atalik to accompany the warriors and fight against the Russians at Sashe. His father when told of this only laughs.

14*th.*—News arrived here three days ago of the Circassians having carried a small fort in the vicinity of Anapa; and of the Abazaks having repelled an invasion of their province. Both reports have been subsequently confirmed, and the latter proves that the Abazaks have acted as might have been expected from their strength, and from the comparative inviolability their territory has hitherto enjoyed. The withdrawal of the Russian forces from the upper Kûban—which is certain—and the report that Sass and his army have been at Aňapa—which may now be doubted—appear to have been mere *ruses* to deceive the people of Abazak; for 2000 Russians headed by the ubiquitous Sass soon after entered that province, and forded the river Shagwashe. They were attacked, immediately after crossing, by a body of Abazaks who lay in ambush on the verge of a forest, with such vigour, that a great portion was drowned in attempting to recross the river, and of the whole detachment but a very few escaped. The evil doings of Sass will, thank God! be suspended for a time, for he was wounded in the leg. This victory is most opportune, and will I hope prove but the prelude to a series of concerted attacks upon the invaders. The great muster at Sashe which I spoke of has probably been caused by this good news; and the fighting there is well kept up, as the frequent cannonading attests. Yesterday I took a ride to Vardan, and saw a great many parties on horse and foot proceeding along the beach to the scene of action.

Four days ago, twelve or fourteen men-of-war, &c.

arrived at Sashe; but they have sailed again, and it may be presumed they only acted as transports for stores, building materials (*i.e.* prepared wood), and some 500 men who were landed by a steamer, probably to replace those who had been cut off by the Circassians.

The fort captured near Anapa is a small one erected for the protection of the colony there. The Circassians carried off its garrison, ammunition, and three cannons.

The present condition and manners of the females of Circassia, appear to be the consequence of the blending of Turkish and Circassian usages, the former of which preponderate with regard to the married women, and the latter as repects the unmarried—making them altogether the very antipodes of the females of Europe, especially of those of the higher classes. The house and society of the married female is inaccessible, as in Turkey, to all males except those of her own family, the ataliks of her children, and the members of her husband's fraternity, who have free admission at all times. When she goes out to visit her female friends, her head and face are closely veiled, and her whole figure enveloped in a cloak; she must avoid meeting males, or, unless they be serfs, stand respectfully aside till they pass. But the maid—whose tight corslet covered in front with clasping plates of silver, and scull-cap ornamented with knobs and lace of silver, give her somewhat of a martial appearance, as if the panoply of her innocence were proof against all assaults; while her pendent tresses, flowing skirts,

and gentle gait, preserve the feminine character of her figure, and, if she be tall, give it much of dignity and grace,—sallies forth unveiled, and upon occasions she fearlessly, but never with effrontery, enters amid groups of men. The tall handsome girl I have repeatedly seen entering the guest-house here when filled with men, to visit the wounded warrior, has made me think more than once of the "Maid of Orleans" performing this military duty to her companions in arms.

But, although the charms of the matrons be thus concealed from public view, it must not be supposed that they have smothered one of the chief (and certainly not the least amiable) characteristics of their sex —the desire of admiration; for the veil they wear is in general white as the driven snow, of very ample folds, and often of muslin, or the finest texture they can afford, and the paraja, or cloak, is one of the most costly articles of Circassian dress, being a very large square of European woollen, as fine as they can possibly afford to pay for.

The government of every family is understood to be vested in the father; but I have heard enough here and there to convince me, that this supremacy depends in this, as in other countries, upon whether the preponderance of intellect belong to him or his consort.

How superlatively ridiculous do some of the follies of what is called civilised life become when one's mind has got a little "unsophisticated" by living among an artless people; when one contrasts the ceaseless dance of fashion in Europe, and all the

monstrosities in turn produced—the hats, petersham, tally-ho, and clerical—the small and large-collared, broad and swallow-tailed coats—the apoplexy-inducing neckcloths and stocks of our men—and the bonnets, bussles (!), and sleeves, of all possible forms and sizes, of our women, with the simply elegant and unvarying attire of these Asiatics, whom we reckon among barbarians! But while the freaks of that despot, Fashion, were they limited only to those sumptuary matters (the bare enumeration of which, however, I feel draw upon me a portion of the ridicule that belongs to them), might be dismissed with a smile, feelings of a deeper cast are called up when we find that the region of mind is similarly invaded, and that most of the individuals composing that section of society which claims for itself the attributes of superior intellectual cultivation and enlightenment, are as much the slaves of mode in thought as they are in dress; that their minds, instead of being engaged in the simple yet exalted investigation of truth, are enthralled by the phantoms of a faction.

I know not, however, whether some stray Parisian originally gave the Circassians the idea of endeavouring to improve God's work in the form of the waists of the young girls by girding them tightly in a leathern cincture, with fishes (according to the seaman's phrase) of wood, which was worn until the wedding-night, when the bridegroom had the privilege of ripping it open with his dagger. This practice still prevails, excepting that the tightness has within these few years been wisely abated, and the fishes entirely dispensed with.

However reclaimed this portion of the country be at present, revelations are occasionally made which prove that at no distant date its condition was not very orderly. Hassan Bey says that in his youth his glory was in exploits by sea; that he in some measure abandoned the house of his father, who disapproved of such a life, and in the intervals between expeditions in search of Russian vessels, or to the coast of the Azras to make captives, he used to live on the beach beside his dearly-loved boats. One of the persons so captured and sold to the Turks by him, returned lately this way from Constantinople with a large stock of merchandise, the fruits of his industry since he had been liberated by his Turkish master, and thanked his captor for having put him in the way of becoming rich. A worse fate however befell some Sardinians through their not having been sufficiently careful to provide proof of the distinction between them and Russians. The captain of their vessel was induced by some Circassians at Constantinople to come here with a cargo of goods for sale, which he did the more readily from having made two or three successful voyages to Semez. But an individual who is said to have been principally concerned in the invitation, spread a report that the captain was a Russian spy, and on this account the ship was boarded, himself and the second in command killed in the fight that took place, the crew mastered, made prisoners, and sold to the Turks, and the proceeds of the ship and cargo divided among her captors. This occurred fifteen years ago. When the falsehood of the report which

caused this sad transaction was discovered, the person who had circulated and invented it was forced to fly from the indignation of his countrymen, and it is only of late that he has been permitted to return. He was so far punished by not having any share of the spoil allotted to him, and is at present in a state of dependence. I felt interested by his dark expressive features; but the nature of the interest was changed, as may be supposed, on learning his character. Such vessels in the Russian trade or transport service as can be fallen in with are still liable to be attacked by the boats of the Circassians, but of late they have generally come armed with cannon. The boat-expeditions against the Azras of the coast are at an end, but plunderings in the interior are still occasionally continued; for four men of this neighbourhood, one of them my wounded patient, went *on foot* last winter to the neighbourhood of the Laba, and brought thence four men they had contrived to capture. One of the serfs here is a young noble of that neighbourhood, who was thus captured some five years ago, and afterwards bought by my host. This must be put an end to, otherwise anything like general permanent combination of the different provinces will be impossible. The only plea advanced in excuse of the practice is that the provinces in question are considered hostile, because they have made terms with the Russians. The force of ancient national habit also tends to the continuance of the evil. The national oath must be the means used for eradicating it.

15*th*.—Shamuz when here seemed to make a

boast of having prevented his countrymen in the north from sending ambassadors to England with Nadir Bey; but the people in this quarter with whom the proposition in some measure originated, are much displeased with his conduct, and say it is much to be regretted that application had not been made to them, as fifty persons could have been found ready and willing to go. They have also had it in contemplation to send Hassan Bey and me as ambassadors to London at their expense; but the expectation of my vessels and news, and probably the menaced descents of the Russians upon other points of the coast, seem to have suspended all further discussion of the subject for the present.

22nd.—Yesterday we heard of an event, which is said, and I can readily believe, to have created a great and depressing sensation throughout the whole north; viz. the death of Pshûghûï Bey, the most influential and esteemed chief of Psadûg. It may be recollected he paid us English a visit at Semez last summer, for the purpose of learning precisely what hope there was of our government or countrymen befriending the cause of Circassian independence, upon which occasion we were struck with the display of respect and esteem towards him on the part of all the chiefs and people, who loaded him with presents, and testified to us the many services he had rendered them, in procuring and sending intelligence of the movements of the Russians. His deportment that of native nobility, and his conversation that of ardent patriotism, appeared to us to warrant fully all the homage then accorded him. In the course of conver-

sation he told us, that he feared his visit, although he had not made known the main object of it, would bring him into difficulties with his very near neighbour the Russian commander at Yekaterinodar. Pshûghûï was in Psadûg what Jambolet had been in the neighbouring province Hatukwoï—the uncompromising assertor of Circassian independence; and the murder of the latter so immediately previous to the aggressions the Russians have just made upon these and the other Kûban provinces still dwelling vividly in my recollection, it immediately and inevitably occurred to me on hearing of the death of the former, that the lingering disorder by which he was affected all winter, and of which he died, had been caused by poison administered to him by the Russian physician, whom, with like generous conduct as Jambolet displayed in his fatal visit to Sass, he employed in his family. I have since learned that this is the general report and conviction throughout the north. If the Russians wince under our suspicions, let them prove that it was not by the subornation of their authorities that Jambolet was shot, and that Blaque, the talented editor of the "Moniteur Ottoman," was poisoned on his journey to England—"Non sic itur ad astra"—either as regards nations or individuals.

The other day a small Turkish vessel was run—through ignorance of what is passing on this coast—within sight of the Russian squadron off Sashe, and was consequently captured, by the steamer accompanying it. An offer has subsequently been made by the Russians, to give up this vessel, her cargo, crew, and passengers—among whom are some females

—in exchange for a handsome small brass cannon the Circassians captured in the action of the 25th of last month, in which case I think it highly probable —from an incident which I recollect having occurred on board the Ajax—that neither capture would be mentioned in the despatches, for the sake of the commandant's military character. But the hard-hearted natives have refused him this small favour.

The Russians seem to know well by how precarious a tenure their sod-forts would be held if their opponents possessed but a few pieces of artillery; hence the tempting offer for this small one, and the "grave aspect," according to the Petersburgh Gazette, which the affair of the Vixen assumed, when it was discovered that two of the small guns mentioned in her register were not forthcoming.

Arable land being here, from the nature of the country, much less abundant than in the north, the patches in the valleys and on the less abrupt hills are held from father to son by the families who have obtained possession of them, with great tenacity. Thus Hassan Bey says that for a portion of the valley which has been held by his family for about 150 years, and which is level and may measure eight English acres, he would not take 2000 piastres (nearly £18).

The people assist each other by turns in cultivation, and many of them convert the task into a merry-making, in which abundance of wine or other strong potations are distributed, to the great solace of a Polish serf here, who readily offers his services upon such occasions and returns in the evening little fit for

his domestic duties. But this is a sin which my present host views with indulgent eyes.

26th.—By a note which I have received from Mr. L. two days since, I learn that Shamuz has expressed to him and others his sincere regret for his conduct to me, which he attributes to one of those violent fits of spleen he is subject to (not frequently it is to be hoped), and I am told he and others in the north desire my return there for the sole purpose of parting as friends, to prevent the *mala fama* which might otherwise arise against that portion of the country. I shall not go, however, unless some new necessity arise, and I wish my noncompliance may be felt as a punishment, for the people in general have much need of a lesson, in regard to the licence they give themselves in inventing and circulating the most scandalous accusations against each other whenever their tempers are piqued. Mr. L. purposes leaving the country by the first opportunity he can avail himself of, deeming his remaining of no further utility. I would fain do so too, as the novelty of this half-civilised life has long since evaporated, and still more as I have other duties that call me hence; but I feel that I *must* await some time longer the sequel of the most recent intelligence I received from England.

On the 24th, eight large Russian ships arrived off the Toapse, and others continued arriving until next day, when they amounted in all to thirty-five sail, thirteen of the largest of which, chiefly two-deckers, were speedily arranged in line by means of three steamers, at about 100 paces from the

beach, where the échelle presents least obstruction from rising ground, and immediately commenced so heavy a cannonade that the Circassians were forced to quit their defences and seek shelter at a little distance behind some hillocks. The army having been landed in the mean time a little to the north, rapidly, yet in great confusion, gained the summits of some low hills there, and by this means took the defences in flank. Although the Circassians were assembled in considerable force, they appear to have been taken by surprise, imagining, probably, that other échelles between Toapse and Sashe were to be previously attacked, and many of them were at the time of the debarkation eagerly engaged in saving their families and effects. So little notice of the event seemed to have been spread through the neighbourhood, that Luca and two other messengers who were returning to me from Agûïa—only an hour and a half's journey distant from Toapse—were very nearly cut off by the advanced portion of the army; and made their escape, amid volleys of imprecations, bullets, and balls. This incident, added to the general complexion of affairs here, has increased the restiveness of my small establishment, and day after day I am dunned with arguments about the necessity of our taking means to escape while a path remains open. My situation it may therefore be supposed is not at present a very pleasant one, as I cannot go, and I cannot allow both my servants to go; yet I know that I shall, as usual, be judged by the result only, not by the circumstances which now constrain me, and that if it prove unfortunate, I shall be said to have exposed these men to

danger through my obstinacy. I have done all I can do at present, viz., taken every opportunity I could find to make the true state of affairs here known to the friends of the country.

One of my messengers who goes to Constantinople with letters, and who has seen a good deal of warfare in Europe and Asia, says that the entrenchments marked out by the Russians, even before he left Toapse, seem to announce their intention of constructing there a fort nearly as extensive as that at Anapa. He further tells me, as you may remember I mentioned before, that it is there they purpose constructing a dock and ship-building establishment.

30th.—To-day I have received safely all the effects belonging to me and my servants that I left at Semez; among which are a horse, and a sabre ornamented with silver—articles of temptation for most Circassians — which circumstance so far proves Shamuz' retrocession from the ground he had taken against me, and the incredulity with which his charge had been received by others—if he attempted to circulate it.

Shimtoatsh, 8th June.—The people of Sashe say, that on the 1st or 2nd instant a steamer, bearing the Turkish flag, arrived amid the Russian shipping off that station; that her stay among them was short; and that she departed, as she had come, in the direction of Tribizond.

Some Turkish merchants arrived lately in the north state, that an Englishman came with them as far as Sinope, and mentioned to them, in confidence, his intention to come over here on his return from Persia.

Andrea, a dragoman whom Mr. U. lately discarded for profligacy, came also to Sinope with these merchants, bearing, as is said, a firman, desiring the Circassians to make peace. If such a person as he bear such a document, it must be a forgery, emanating probably from the Russian Chancellery; a suitable reception, therefore, shall be prepared for him and his despatches. The merchants, deeming him a spy, very properly refused to permit him to come here with them*.

But the most strange tale, and which is yet well attested, is of a large ship, painted entirely black, and with a red flag, having four days since arrived from seaward, somewhat beyond cannon-range of the Russian vessels at Toapse, from which two boats were sent alongside of her, which she appeared to capture, as she immediately set sail with them seaward again, the Russian ships firing at her in vain. This is quite an incident for Monk Lewis, or whoever may have caught his mantle, to weave out of it a tale of "The Demon Ship."

11*th*.—I am here quite shut in from the rest of the world, in a little glen, so narrow that the sun shines in it about four hours less than elsewhere. I have here come, for the first time, upon the native locality of boxwood, which in large trees and shrubs borders all our stream, and extends a good way up the neighbouring ravines, growing in the clefts of a schistous rock. The trade in it has ceased for some time past, serfs being the chief export since freights were

* He has subsequently been appointed dragoman to the Russian general on the Circassian coast.

raised by the blockade; but a good deal is still cut down for the manufacture of very neat spoons, in general use here, and of which a good many are exported to the north. The natives, with their usual contempt for trees, hack very recklessly with their axes at this valuable product of their soil.

Although shut out from the rest of the world, we have here no lack of information as to what goes on in our immediate vicinity; for my host—one of the wealthiest persons on the coast, and said to be worth about £6000—was wounded a few days ago, and his hamlet is incessantly thronged with large parties of his friends, who come to pay their respects to him in the guest-house, where, as usual on such occasions, he is laid in state to receive them. From fifteen to twenty persons usually remain in it all night, the greater part of which was at first spent in songs, dancing, and other merriment, for his amusement (!) —those inside and an equally large party outside singing alternately, and sometimes in responses to each other. A ploughshare, too, which lay by the divan was now and then smartly struck with a hammer, so that any continuance of sleep was out of the question, while a large fire blazed on the hearth to give light to this national folly, and all this beside a man with his pulse at about ninety. Some idea of the congregation of guests may be formed from the fact that in six days there have been killed and eaten by them, five bullocks, one goat, and one lamb.

First, in my capacity of surgeon, I got the singing and dancing (for which a party of young girls came each evening—only the serfs, however, among them

performing) arrested, and then the rest of the noise gradually abated, till my patient was left to pass the whole night in repose. But I fear it will be long before these ridiculous prejudices are quite eradicated; for our host appeared to imagine he would be thought quite unreasonable, however ill he might be, to refuse to see persons who came from a distance to see him, while the guests appeared to think it equally unreasonable that they should be curtailed in the customary amusements of the *occasion*, which amusements they imagine to be also for his good; for the prejudice consists in the belief that the devil may do the sick man mischief if he sleep during the night. The iron ploughshare is placed at his bedside, to be struck three times with the hammer by each newly-arrived visitor, at the same time that he dips his fingers in water—in a bowl with an egg in it—and sprinkles it on the bedclothes. This is an expedient for averting the "evil eye;" for which purpose also a line of *orthodox* cowdung has been drawn all round the inside of the walls of the apartment, and the Koran laid upon his pillow. Belief in the evil effects this eye may occasion is one of the ideas most deeply rooted among both Circassians and Turks, as being sanctioned by the Koran.

Shemitt Urûtsûk-okû Islam, my present host, is brother-in-law to Hassan Bey, and it was at the earnest request of the latter and his lady that I came here to attend to his cure, in which my interest is somewhat abated since I learned how his wound was received.

Among his numerous serfs is a Russian deserter,

a Turk or rather Tatar of Khazan—for his features savour more of Mongol than Turkish extraction*—and his age may be about forty. Islam determined, however, that he should have a wife, and accordingly purchased at Makupse a young serf-girl, said to have been remarkably beautiful, and who, when brought to this hamlet, refused to be married to the Tatar; loudly protesting that she would never consent to be united but to one of her own countrymen—perhaps some secret one she had already set her affections upon. Be this as it may, Islam endeavoured to compel her by punishment, when she escaped from his tyranny by hanging herself. The girl and her sorrows were consigned to the grave, and probably not much more thought of; for Islam not long after returned to Makupse, when the brother of the girl—whose feelings appear to have been as powerful as her own—watching his opportunity, stabbed Islam with his dagger, and fled, and, I must say I feel somewhat satisfied in adding, escaped; for although the people here treat their serfs in general kindly, some of them appear to set their will in the case of marriage totally aside; reducing them in this respect to the level of their cattle, which must propagate for the benefit of their master.

Islam's wound, which is in the pit of the stomach, would probably have been mortal, but for another in the right hand, with which hand he so far averted the dagger. The forsaken Tatar gives a darker version of Islam's criminality; but I believe it to be an in-

* Many Turks settled formerly among the Tatars of the Kaptshak empire; but their descendants repudiate the name of Tatar. Our stanch servant Osman, a native of Taman, gave me proof of this feeling.

vention of his self-love; for his master appears to be much respected, and to have his active and enterprising spirit fully engaged in his extensive commerce and agriculture. His age, moreover, is upwards of fifty: he lost, only last year, his wife, a very beautiful full-grown daughter, and five-and-twenty other persons of his establishment, by the plague—which heavy calamity has broken him down, and, as he says, brought grey hairs upon him for the first time:—and shortly before this incident he had married again, in hopes of yet having another daughter.

I shall close this long episode by an account of the payment for Islam's wife, a widow of Abazak—a large party having arrived thence to receive it. First I saw handled, for two or three days, various saddles and coats of mail, which usually form items in such a transaction; but these were rejected, and the day of payment having arrived, my host (only a fortnight after he had received his wound) sallied forth from the guest-house—dressed in a showy orange silk anteri, with six attendants, two before, two behind, and one on each side—to proceed to his own, and to look after the delivery of the goods in person; but whether this was occasioned by his fear that his wife might pay too high a price for herself, or whether etiquette required it, I cannot say. Two hundred pieces of merchandise (worth here about four shillings each), two serf-girls, and two horses, have been already given to the principal, besides four or five pieces each to some ten or a dozen attendants; and other two serf-girls and other six horses have to be given some time hence.

9*th*.—Two serf-girls of this establishment—about twelve to thirteen years of age—have just been sold to a merchant going to Constantinople. Twelve horse-loads of merchandise have arrived in payment of them—a sight that sickens my British stomach, however it may operate on that of Islam. The girls have been here to kiss his hand at parting, on which occasion the hearts of both of them seemed greatly convulsed; and one with reddish hair (and therefore keener feelings) shed floods of tears, which went nigh to set mine a-flowing. Parting, however, is always painful, and I trust these two girls may be sustained by the ambition I believe to be common here among the youth of their sex—of becoming wives to nabobs of Stambûl.

19*th*.—As my host here sees his cure becoming more certain, his gratitude warms proportionably, and he has had me informed (yet delicately, because he had been told of my repugnance to compensation being talked of), that he will gladly present me with a female serf (value here about 60*l*. to 70*l*., and half or twice as much more at Constantinople, according to her qualifications and the supply in the slave-market there). This for the information of some of the legions of medical students at home. I do not mean to insinuate that they would combine slave-trade with medical practice here; they might be amply paid in some other currency, more agreeable to their feelings and conscience; and the most ignorant among them could scarcely fail of conferring much comparative benefit upon these people.

LETTER XXI.

DREADFUL STORM AND DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET — FEELINGS AND CONDUCT OF THE CIRCASSIANS AFTER THIS EVENT — A DRAGOMAN — INCREASED UNION AMONG THE TRIBES — LANGUAGES — AN ANCIENT CROSS — EXCURSION TO THE WRECKS — MISADVENTURES OF HASSAN BEY — HASSAN JOINS THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY — ATTACHMENT OF THE CIRCASSIANS TO TURKEY.

SHIMTOATSH, 20*th June*, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. Although the Russians met with as stout a resistance at Sashe as, considering the disparity of means possessed by the combatants, could well have been expected, yet, seeing they had effected descents both at Sashe and Toapse—the two most valuable anchorages on the southern portion of the coast— they no doubt considered their campaign to be proceeding triumphantly; and, in all probability, projected descents at other échelles toward the north, in order that they might be prepared to reply—to any objections which might be urged in Europe against their right to prosecute the conquest of this coast—that it was conquered, and their right therefore no longer a subject for dispute. They have received, however, within these few days, a severe and salutary check.

The weather, since the commencement of their naval operations, has in general been fine, and the wind upon the occasions of their descents, at Sashe

and Toapse, was entirely propitious. The security they felt was in proportion, and encouraged them in most unseamanlike negligence. Both at Sashe and Toapse, the vessels left to aid the land operations, remained for more than a fortnight—even the larger ones—in their original positions, at a very short distance from the beach—some at Toapse, as I have been told, so near as ten fathoms!

On the 10th the thermometer stood at noon in the shade at 80°, which being a somewhat sudden increase of temperature, made me anticipate that windy weather would ensue. Clouds and rain then announced the approaching change. Next morning the wind set in—a stiff breeze from the south-west (which blows right on shore)—and increased in violence till towards evening, when I learned that a large brig had been seen off Sûbesh, endeavouring to stand to the north-westward; but so close in with the land, that the cries of those on board were distinctly heard on the beach. That night the gale was at the height of its fury; and such a one as has never been experienced on this coast, during summer, since Anapa was taken. We had all, of course, our presentiments of disasters to the hostile squadron, and on the 13th these were fully confirmed, by the intelligence which arrived at my quarters here, both from the north and from the south. From Sashe, I learned that one ship of two tiers of guns, two corvettes, five large brigs, and two small craft, had all been wrecked there; and from Toapse and Agûïa, that two steamers (one of them the largest of the three which are on the coast) and two men-of-war, had also been totally

wrecked, and eleven of the latter driven on shore, and supposed to be so severely damaged as to be unfit for sea. Subsequent accounts informed me, that one large ship and a cutter had been seen to go ashore off Arduwhatsh; and that two vessels had been seen to founder off Psid, off which neighbourhood—that is, near Shapsekwa, where a descent was expected—seven vessels had been seen immediately previous to the commencement of the gale.

Here is the fearful summary of the disasters along the coast to the southward of Ghelenjík, so far as I have hitherto been able to ascertain the truth, from the testimony of numerous witnesses:—At Arduwhatsh, two vessels totally wrecked, and all on board supposed to have perished:—At Sashe, the ten vessels already mentioned totally wrecked, and all, or almost all on board of them, supposed to have perished:—At Toapse, of seventeen vessels—viz. one frigate, three corvettes, eight brigs (three apparently transports, and five gun-brigs), three cutters, and two steamers—such are the accounts from the persons upon whom I place most dependence; viz., two respectable Turkish merchants, who seem to have been at pains to ascertain the truth both at this place and at the places to the north of it:—All the larger vessels were from the first, or have since become, total wrecks; and of the steamers, one foundered in deep water, and only a portion of the funnel of the other is now to be seen:—Four or five of the smaller craft have again been got afloat:—Of the crews of the larger vessels, the greater part is supposed to have perished, and a few to have escaped into the fort:—The frigate which was wrecked

at some little distance from it, was plundered (before the garrison arrived for its defence) by twelve persons, who had each to his share 900 roubles, and many other articles; and who found that all the guns but two had been heaved overboard:—At Agûïa one transport laden with planks and iron was totally wrecked; some of the crew escaped by night to the fort of Toapse, and the rest were drowned. From this vessel the Circassians took ashore three pieces of cannon:—At Nibû, another transport, also laden with planks and iron, was totally wrecked, all her hands were drowned, and from her the Circassians have carried ashore other two pieces of cannon:—At Tû a third transport in ballast was totally wrecked; a part of the crew taken prisoners, and the rest drowned:—The largest steamer had been at Tû the previous day, with a body of soldiers, to burn a Turkish vessel; but they were repulsed without effecting their object:—At Neghipsekwa a gun-brig was totally wrecked, and all those on board perished, except seven who were taken prisoners!

Three days after the bombardment of Toapse, the largest vessels departed—preparatory, it is supposed, to another descent somewhere else—otherwise the Russian loss must have been much more considerable.

The plunder in small arms, damaged powder, silver coin, ship stores, bales of merchandise, &c., is very great.

If to the above list (the exact summation of the disaster can only be known to the Russians, and they probably will never divulge it) be added the two

vessels seen to founder off Psid, the one seen in such imminent danger off Sûbesh, and seven seen off Shapsekwa (of which those seen to founder off Psid were possibly two) and what further loss may have occurred off Anapa, of which I shall speak when intelligence arrives—it may be inferred that the immature navy of Russia in the Black Sea has experienced a check in its growth, from which some considerable time and much nursing will be necessary to enable it to recover.

I have often heard the Circassians speak of the Russian war as a chastisement inflicted upon them by the Almighty for their sins, and the joy and gratitude manifested by all for the partial intermission of it, expected now to ensue, are extreme; for all consider this event as a special interposition of the Deity; and thus a great and solemn sacrifice, by way of thanksgiving, has been performed at Toapse, and the bodies of the animals distributed among the poor. The piety and right feeling thus shown by these simple people, appear to form a very edifying contrast to the tenour of the Russian military epistles to them—"There are but two powers, God in heaven, and the Emperor upon earth!"—"What do you expect, do you not know that if the heavens should fall, Russia has power enough to support them on her bayonets?" 'Powers Eternal! such names mingled!' It is to be hoped that the servants of this modern Xerxes may, *for their own sakes,* be taught humility by this severe lesson, otherwise their blasphemous arrogance, like the drunkenness of the Spartan Helots, does good

in its strong inverse action upon the minds of the Circassians*.

But it is not by sea alone that the Russians have now experienced reverses, for at Sashe the garrison of the new fort made two sorties, to defend the wrecks of the two corvettes which lie two or three miles from it. The first took place at night, ineffectually; the second the following morning, when the assembled Circassians attacked the soldiers, defeated and pursued them to the very walls of the fort, which only about a hundred entered, the remainder to a large amount having been all cut to pieces. Their bodies lay along the beach for the distance mentioned, and it was remarked that among them were none of the (forced) auxiliaries, neither Georgian nor Azran; all were Russian. Many nobles and others of the bravest fell in this affair; but the numerical loss on the part of the Circassians was not great. The Circassians after plundering the wrecks of these two corvettes at Sashe set fire to them. On the night of the 13th they contrived to set fire to four of the other wrecks which lie right under the guns of the fort, and the stripping them of their iron water-tanks, copper sheathing, bolts, bars of iron, &c., has been going on nightly ever since. I have frequently met on the beach large parties, both foot and horse, laden with this plunder, which forms a most seasonable supply, and will, no doubt, soon be transformed into swords, ploughshares, axes, knives, and other necessaries. One article

* It may not be generally known that the Russian soldiers and sailors are mustered each evening, and made to say prayers, in which they return thanks for their benefits (that is the benefits from God of which the Emperor robs them) to God and to the Emperor, "*our God upon earth.*"

seemed to me not worth carriage; viz., pieces of cable two or three yards long, but these I find the people boil, bleach, and unravel, and then weave the stuff into cloth for wearing. It is only towards the north that hemp is cultivated plentifully on this coast; hereabouts space cannot be afforded for it.

A considerable sensation was manifested throughout this neighbourhood on the occasion of one of our servants (the foreigners among whom have always been called Englishmen) having fallen in one of these affairs. He resided at Vardan, near a Turkish vessel he was to have sailed by, with a large accumulation of our letters. But he had often been in the wars, and, creatures of habit as we are, he could not abstain from participating in what was going forward, with such exciting interest, at but a few hours' riding from his residence. On the morning of the 13th he was in the midst of a party of about a thousand Circassians, who were reconnoitring the wrecks that lie under the fort, when a ball from a small cannon, fired by some Russians in one of them, pierced him from the shoulder to the back. He survived but a few minutes, yet he addressed those around him—bidding them farewell, "as his hour was come"—with as much composure as if he had been unhurt. He was, I believe, a Pole by birth, and spoke (as people of his class speak), besides his native language, German, Italian, Russian, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Georgian, Hindûstanee, and some English; for during three years he served as interpreter on board of some of the East India Company's shipping, had been once in England, and often in the service of English travellers, among others in that of Mr. Ellis, our

late ambassador in Persia, whose presents to him he seemed proud of enumerating. What his real name was I know not. At Pera he passed by that of Paulo Veneroli, by which he must be known to many who have travelled in the East, where I have been told his singular and daring adventures were perhaps more numerous than those of any other of his day. Dauntless courage and considerable dexterity, both mental and manual, were his chief characteristics; a tact in the achievement of his objects which can only be acquired in such a school as he had studied in, not idly. He prided himself upon his knowledge of what he called "die Asiatische politik," and upon the versatility with which he could become—not by any means in the scriptural sense—"all things unto all men." In Europe acting the "liberal-minded" Frank, among the more rigid Mussulmans of the East the sanctified Hadji (for he had thrice visited the sacred city); but indemnifying himself for this self-denial, whenever he met a party of "good fellows," either in the deserts of Arabia or the wine valleys of these mountains, by deep potations, in which he was invincible, and eliciting their admiration by the feats of a rope-dancer. In hunting, hawking, horsemanship, and all field-knowledge and handicraft, he was perfect, and thus gained many friends. I could not esteem him, on account of the versatility of his principles; still, his activity, address, wit, firmness, and courage, cause his loss to be felt by me as a sad gap. "Are we not here now—and are we not gone in a moment?"

Not unlike Paulo are most of the individuals from whom the generality of English travellers, in their

ignorance of Eastern tongues, must of necessity, and often involuntarily, receive their impressions of the communities of the East they visit. And the prejudice that thus accrues is twofold; for "my lady's prattle filtered through her woman" is about as likely to convey a just notion of the sprightliness and wit of one of our "belles," as the ungrammatical, totally unintellectual "verbiage" of one of these itinerant dragomans is likely to give the Englishman a just notion of Asiatic ratiocination, or the Asiatic a just notion of the English character. As the English interest in the East, both moral and material, increases, it may, I think, be justly expected that her principal languages may become objects of interest to our youth, and the attentive student will find himself acquire more insight into national character from the mere idioms of a page of dialogue than he would from an hour's questioning of most of the present race of dragomans.

Here resides a lad, one of the numerous hostages whom the people on the coast towards Ghagra lately obliged their chiefs to give as security against their making terms with the Russians, and who are distributed among the wealthier individuals—such as my host here—in this part of the country.

26th June, Khissa.—The Russians certainly may boast of having made some *material* progress in the conquest of this coast, that is, in having gained so much ground as the guns of their forts command; but the progress of their *moral* conquest is indisputably retrograde, for never within the memory of man, or even within the range of tradition, was there such unity as now exists, throughout these north-western

provinces, which still retain unimpeded means of communication. I will recapitulate the proofs of this unity, as the fact is valuable. The appellation and language of the Circassians is "Adighe;" Tcherkess, a word of Turkish or Tatar derivation, is never used by the natives, and even not understood by many of them. This language is used from the eastern extremity of Kabarda to the Black Sea, including Abazak. Along the coast the people reckon three languages, viz., Adighe, as far south as the small stream Bû (which is the boundary of Notwhatsh); Abaza, between the Bû and Hamish; and Azra, thence southward to the frontier of Mingrelia. The difference is such that natives of any two, who speak only their own languages, cannot understand each other *, and formerly, the people north and south of Hamish regarded each other with coldness or aversion—the fruit of ancient feuds—and little communication or community of feeling existed between them. As however the pressure from without increased, the impropriety of permitting this state of things to continue became apparent, and Jeriko-okû Islam, and Hadji Datchûm-okû, the former a chief of the south, and the latter a chief of this part of the country, succeeded in putting an end to it, and in establishing such perfect accord between the two races, that, on the two several occasions of the enemy landing at Arduwhatsh and Sashe, they aided each other, heart and hand, in their endeavours to repel him, and may be said now to form but one community, which extends from Ghagra to Toapse: from

* Specimens of these three languages will be found in the Appendix.

thence to Pshat may be called another, whose measures are taken chiefly in concert with the Abazaks in their immediate vicinity; and the rest of Notwhatsh and Shapsuk forms a third, and by far the most powerful of the three; and, as such, commands the special respect of the other two, whose caution not to give its chief offence I have had frequent opportunity of observing. The ancient lines of demarcation at Bû and Hamish have been entirely obliterated, for all as far as Ghagra have adopted, and now class themselves under, the great national name of Adighe. To distinguish the Azras of the south part of the coast from those on this side of the Ghagra mountains, the former are now called *Psibé*, which is the name of the district around Sûkûm-kaleh.

The administration of the national oath, which was begun at Ghagra, and is now being proceeded with toward the north; and the taking of hostages from their chiefs by the people of the south, and placing them in the hands of the people here, are further proofs of the unity and strength of feeling that now exists against the Russians. The latter measure was probably deemed advisable by the people in consequence of their having seen that their countrymen on the coast to the south of the pass of Ghagra had been led into submission to the Russians, through the influence of their chiefs, principally of Helash-okû Hamed, prince of Sûkûm, who though known to deplore the degradation of his province and himself (an independent prince made a Russian general), is at present unable to escape from thraldom, his family after many years of hard fighting having been obliged to give hostages

to the Russians. I think, however, that there is reason to hope that the people even to the south of Ghagra may soon range themselves under the Circassian banner, leaving the family of its prince to its fate. Measures of probation are in hand to accomplish this desirable object. There is no good reason why they should not have continued the war, unless obedience to the will of their prince be called one; for although their coast be somewhat open, the mountains of the vicinity are even more rugged and defensible than those on this side of the central ridge, and the proximity to supplies of necessaries from Turkey is greater. I allude at present only to the Azras of the coast; those inhabiting the great range of mountains behind it are perfectly free and independent.

The Sûbesh or Shakhe is frequently called Mawayeh (" river of blood "), on account of scarce a year passing without some person being drowned in fording it. It is one of the largest and most rapid rivers on the coast, and I had a taste of its dangers on the 14th, when swelled, as it still was, by the rain of the previous storm. The fate of Paulo had been communicated to me abruptly by Stanislav: I set out from Shimtoatsh, equally abruptly, to ascertain it, and found, only when arrived on the margin of the angry torrent, that it would have been well I had provided an experienced guide for fording it. My horse, rather a weak one, yielded so far to the force of the current as to bring us into a deep part of it, where he lost his footing, had to swim for our lives, and gave us both a good ducking before we could escape. My escort prudently forbore from following me; con-

sequently I had to make the rest of my evening journey along the shore to Khissa alone, in the drenched state in which I had emerged from the flood.

The valley of the Shakhe is large, fertile, and populous, the opening to the sea broad, and a large portion of it quite level, yet the inhabitants who make certain of the Russians attempting there the establishment of a fort, are determined to oppose them, and have covered the line in front with large ditches at different angles, in which they purpose sheltering themselves while the cannonading continues (for the depth of the sea admits of large vessels approaching close to the shore), so as to be ready to give the troops when they approach a murderous reception.

10*th July*.—Having heard accidentally that some of the guns of one of the corvettes, wrecked to the southward of Sashe, lay quite near the shore, I immediately sent one of my servants to Hadji Dakhûmokû to say I should wish to see him the first time he passed (he is constantly in motion), to consult about a mode of raising and landing them, which I thought practicable. Next day he came to see me, and offered to place at my disposal a hundred men, if I thought the work could be accomplished. I said I thought so from the description given me, but that I would go and inspect matters before I made further arrangements. Yesterday I performed this engagement. On passing through my admired valley of Sashe, I was delighted, and somewhat surprised, to find none of its beauties as yet tarnished; not a hamlet burned, nor any of its stately trees felled. The pastures too were still covered with flocks and herds to within a mile or two of the sea. The only symptoms in fact

of an unquiet neighbourhood were, that no tillage was going forward; that a larger proportion of horses were grazing with their legs strapped (that they might be readily caught when needed for action); and that numbers of armed men were seen sauntering about or returning in large bodies from their night plundering of the wrecks that lie under the guns of the fort. We met one party carrying a man who had been wounded by a cannon-shot, and another carrying one who had been drowned in this dangerous service; and scarcely a night passes that such casualties are not caused by firing from the fort, yet it is intrepidly continued, the chance of gaining a few okas of iron or copper being sufficient temptation for numbers to make a day to two's journey to this spot.

The only exploits the Russians have attempted since their establishment here (except the defence of the wrecks) are such as were rendered absolutely necessary by the extreme insecurity of their position —flanked on each side as it is by dense forests, and commanded in front by imminent heights; both of which were incessantly made use of by the Circassians to harass their enemies in the camp and the fort with rifle, and occasionally with cannon. The contests for these different localities sufficiently explain the cause of the cannon-firing heard here for some weeks almost daily.

The forest on the north-western side of their position the Russians have at length succeeded in getting felled to about a cannon-shot distance from it; and after some desperate yet fruitless efforts, by sallies, to deter the Circassians from venturing on the hills in front of the fort, they contrived, during the night,

to erect on one of them a stockade, fortified by three pieces of cannon, which commands some of the nearest hills and part of the south-western forest. But this stockaded hill is itself commanded by others within half shot-range, and the country immediately to the south-east is a series of rugged, precipitous glens and ravines, clad by dense and ancient oak-forest, so that the excursions of the garrison, if it should dare attempt any, are not likely to be extensive; and the stockade will probably soon be abandoned as untenable.

Having expressed a wish to see one of the ancient crosses I have spoken of, I was taken to the summit of the height which commands the fort, to a place whose consecration was indicated by some scattered graves, but which I afterwards saw was only about half shot-range from where some Russians were venturing on a little recreation at the side of their stockade—a small hill-top hiding us from each other. Here I came to the object of my curiosity, pendent from the arm of a huge old oak, to which it was attached by an iron wedge. The accompanying sketch can best convey some idea of this curious relic of antiquity and undoubted proof of Christianity having once here prevailed, as well as of the locality chosen for it. The hooks were the recipients of many a various offering, which were scrupulously left there till borne off piecemeal by the elements. Some rags of the last showed that such offerings had not long since been made. Some of the people wished to have this cross taken down, as a damning witness of the error and superstition of their ancestors, and lest the Russians might attempt also to found upon it some

G. Barnard, lith.

From a Sketch by Jas Stanislaus Bell, Esq.re

Day & Haghe, Lith.rs to the Queen.

ANCIENT PENDENT CROSS, ON THE HILLS OF SASHE.

claim to the country as having once been Christian; while others regard the symbol with the same veneration as Ali Achmet Bey, the head chief of the district, who claims the right of preventing the desecration of this relic of the faith of his remote ancestry; and it has been the cause, I believe, of a more determined resistance being offered to the Russians in one or two of their sorties in this direction.

Descending from this sacred hill into the first deep glen immediately under it, we passed a large and very well-constructed hamlet, most picturesquely situated, and environed with "gadding vines," and many other fruit-trees. Its inhabitants had removed—as the fort is not more than a mile, if so much, distant—but it was crowded with men who were waiting the melting and division of the iron they had taken from the wrecks during the previous night. The passage of another deep glen, and through another large well-constructed hamlet, whose only remaining inhabitants were two old dogs that gave us a most fierce reception, brought us into a magnificent forest of oaks of great age and most stately growth; crossing which diagonally towards the sea, we found several parties bivouacked, and preparing their simple meals in large kettles, of which each party brings one. On the shore were some fifty men, busily engaged in plundering one of the ships. Her wreck—the timbers only now appeared—lay at about six or eight yards from the beach, and was occupied by two or three parties of divers, (among whom were actually some whitebeards,) who brought up every now and then a cannon-ball, a handful of sheathing-copper, slops, or ropes, for which their friends on the beach swam off; and there a

fire blazed, for the benefit of those who got over-chilled.

Having got a full description from these divers of the positions of the cannons—some of which I found to be very favourable—a lively person present volunteered to show me the other *sights* of the place, one of which I would willingly have been spared; viz. many stripped corpses of Russians, which not having been thrown into the sea like the rest, after the severe action that occurred here on the 12th June, had been left to rot in the sun, with or without a branch or two cast on them, that but partially hid their hideousness. The whole beach here for a mile or two is covered with wreck, among which there is a great quantity of planks prepared apparently for the construction of houses. A creek into which the sea seemed to have made its way during the gale—surmounting its barrier of shingle—was piled full of these planks; and among them was said to be an immense number of corpses, of which the intolerable stench gave proof superabundant.

Between this creek and that part of the forest which is opposite the wreck, the Russians had attempted, for its defence, to make a stand, and to fortify a portion of the ground which rises somewhat above the rest. They had cut down a few of the trees and piled them on the forest side as a sort of breast-work; but this appeared to have been only half accomplished when they were driven from it and pursued along the beach as I have before mentioned.

Not content with showing me these more accessible spectacles, my conductor would have me along the beach to take a closer view of the wrecks of two other

war-ships that lay almost immediately beneath the fort; and being now a long way within the range of the cannon, we had to keep close under the foliage of the bank to prevent our being fired at. But I saw a curious contrast to our caution, in two or three men who were making trips from under shelter of the bank (where they deposited their spoil) to the wrecks in front of us, with as much leisure as if they had been beyond all danger! A great many Russians were on the beach at the mouth of the river opposite the camp; and some appeared to me to be busied in repairing one of the wrecks there.

On our return I took a survey of the works of the fort, which are of a considerable extent, and promise to be as strong as the position and materials will admit of. The earthen wall is of considerable height, the ditch proportionably deep; and bastions are being constructed at the corners. Many men and horses were then at work, and some of the building-wood seemed to have been saved, as a wooden barracks—but of small extent—had been erected. Our night's entertainment at one of the deserted hamlets (where however the cattle and some male serfs remained) consisted of pasta, honey, and milk, and a deep bed of fern.

My opportunities of forming opinions of the manners and charms of the Circassian females have been rather scant; partly on account of the partial introduction of Turkish seclusion, but much more on account of the position assigned me, which, to my regret, keeps them in general at a most respectful distance, while my servants are frequently invited to the family-houses. I see however, if I should, like

the "Guid-man of Ballengeach," doff my state, and sally forth incognito now and then, I might have more opportunity of enlarging my knowledge of the female world here. The other day having walked down to the sea to bathe, dressed only, on account of the heat, in shirt, drawers, cotton anteri cap, and slippers—a style common here—while I sat on the shingle inspecting the shipping anchored off Sashe (which by the bye have been visible from that point only since the storm —having always previously anchored so near the land that a cape prevented my seeing them)—while I sat there waiting till some females on foot should pass; rather to my surprise they approached, and began speaking to me, when the youngest, a tall and very handsome girl, wearing among other things green silk drawers, and attended by two elder females leading a horse, came and sat down beside me, to take lessons in looking with my telescope, joking and laughing in high glee at the difficulty we found in understanding each other—taking me, as I suppose she did, for a Turk.

The other evening I had an adventure of a different description. I think I have mentioned that this valley, though cultivated throughout, is uninhabited (as are most of the others) towards the sea, the houses of the various proprietors being at the inland extremity, where it is closed in by thickly-wooded hills. In my usual walk I had loitered by a stream near the sea so long, that the moon reigned sole mistress of the sky before I got half way home, when I observed advancing up the valley three men, whose laden horses showed they might probably be strangers; on which account I took a different path-

way, in order to avoid them. I had not gone far, however, before one of them made up to me, and he not having sufficiency of Turkish, nor I of Circassian, to make known to him with fuller explanation than the mere statement who or under whose protection I was; and still more my being quite unarmed save with a walking-stick, caused him to detain me as a suspicious person until his companions came up, when a lively discussion took place between them. This appeared to me to imply that there was some question as to the propriety of the detention: I, therefore, took the liberty of deciding it, by again walking on. But my man was soon again in pursuit of me, and making himself sure by feeling the breast of my anteri, that I had no concealed pistols—this want of arms, by night too, confirming his conviction, I presume, of my being a Russian deserter, and therefore the lawful prize of him, the first finder—he barred my way entirely, and brought me to a dead halt. Resistance (against three armed men) was of course out of the question, as much as it was out of my intention; for the prospect of an adventure, as some variety to the sameness of my life, rather pleased me. I had, therefore, made token of surrender when, as ill luck would have it, there arrived a man from the upper part of the valley (one of the guard, I presume, which is stationed at the entrance of each valley every night), and after a few words exchanged with him I was immediately liberated, and proceeded on my way, after having first allayed any alarm my captor might be in at his mistake. A man on one of our horses then passed us from the opposite direction, and further explanation having I

presume been given by him, my new friend again made up to me and, shaking me good-naturedly by the arm, said something which, I think, may be safely translated—"that was indeed a sad blunder!" This incident may show the vigilant watch kept exercised everywhere over stray enemies—in consequence of the system acted upon with deserters; and the estimation we English at present enjoy, for these people, as I afterwards learned, were from a part of the coast three or four days' journey distant.

I find no greater relief from the dejection and ennui which occasionally visit me, than in thus sauntering down our valley to take my accustomed seat on one of the hills that overhang the beach, where I have a view of the ocean; the picturesque capes of the widely-stretched coast; our lovely valley with the mingling lines of wooded hills rising gradually in altitude toward the precipitous and lofty mountains that form the barrier on the east: or to refresh my spirit by taking a station near some happy band of our neighbours—old and young, males and females—busily engaged in weeding their crops with the hoe or hand, and singing together some lively air to lighten the labour, which they sometimes intermit to come around me, offering some of the refreshments they generally have with them; a light for my pipe, or to joke a little. Thus they aid each other alternately, and their crops in general have the cleanly appearance of one of our nursery-grounds. If a traveller pass while this or any other agricultural occupation is going forward, he almost invariably cries out "Rabestûakho" (May it be productive!); and the rules of good breeding equally require, that when he en-

counters a flock of sheep or goats, he should not press on; but wait until the shepherd have gathered them to one side or other of the pathway, when he exclaims to him "Bowhapshi" (May you have increase!).

The nitre-plant, which I believe to be a peculiar species of the amaranth, does not appear to be so generally cultivated on this portion of the coast as toward the north, probably because supplies of gunpowder have hitherto been more frequently obtained here from Turkey. We may presume that this plant will cease to be a theme for the poets should the use to which the Circassians have turned it become generally known; or that it will be spoken of far otherwise than thus—

> "Immortal *amaranth!* a flower which once
> In paradise, fast by the tree of life,
> Began to bloom; but soon, for man's offence,
> To Heav'n removed, where first it grew, there grows
> And flow'rs aloft, shading *the fount of life* . . ."

My host, Hassan Bey, has had rather a run of ill-luck of late. I mentioned some time since the deceitful friendship his Excellency Baron Rosen had played off upon him, by which means he lost his only remaining trading-vessel, (he sold the other,) and I find another misfortune has accrued to him out of that ill-starred visit to the Marshal at Ardler, sanctioned though it was by the chiefs of these parts. Whether the Baron were then longing for fresh meat, or sought an occasion to embroil Hassan with his countrymen, it were hard to conjecture; however, after offering him sundry handsome presents, all of which were rejected, he begged of Hassan to send him into the fort a couple of goats. Hassan did so,

and I really think that under the consideration that he was indebted to the Baron for a friendly permission to carry on his trade, he could not be blamed for making this small return. His countrymen however thought otherwise; for, on his return homeward, a party met him at Sashe, and, after reproaching him for having sent supplies to the enemy, took from him a sabre which he values at 6000 piasters, and detained it until now that the affair has been regularly tried and judgment given on it, by which he is condemned to pay a fine of 1500 piasters value, in redemption of his sabre!

Among the various plunder taken from the wrecks on the coast to the north, are two articles which I think must have at first puzzled their trovers; viz., 1500 Russian bank-notes, and an immense quantity of champagne. There are, however, Armenians enough in the country to turn both articles to account. I met a man from the north on the shore with a bottle of the wine hung at his saddle-bow, and he has since brought it me, making however such a phrase about the gift that I should not care if it were again at Donskoï, whence I presume it came.

Hassan now exemplifies one good effect of the administration of the national oath. Hitherto he has appeared to me without any religious tenets, or rather, judging by his conversation, I thought he had intuitively adopted those of Epicurus. When, however, the administrators of the oath came here, he took it along with the rest; and voluntarily made an adjunct in abjuring his former habit of drinking wine. He now rigidly adheres to this, reads his

Koran, and is regular in saying his prayers. Indeed, as is common in such cases, he has proceeded from the one extremity of indifference, to the other of fervent zeal, and poor Luca (whom as having had opportunity among the Turks of knowing the right path to salvation he holds less excusable, and, as being moreover a Roman Catholic, he believes to be in a worse predicament than I) has now no quarter shown him, and is put to his shifts to find "reasons for the faith that is in him," and for his not becoming a convert to the doctrines "of the last and greatest prophet."

The bias in favour of order and of good government—which, as in this respect an humble disciple of Napoleon, I believe to be inherent and strong among men in the aggregate, whatever may be their conduct individually—is I think well exemplified in the deep attachment the Circassians still display towards the Turks, whose last Pasha in Anapa, Osman, treacherously surrendered that fortress while it was still capable of defence, and prevented them attacking the Russians when their position was so critical from the miry state of the country around, and their consequent inability to make use of their artillery, that they must have surrendered or been cut to pieces; and whose government has since made an overt and fictitious cession of their country, and received all their late applications for succour with apparent coldness and neglect. Yet they remember with gratitude and kindness that it is to a former Pasha of Anapa, Hassan, that they are indebted for much of the subordination in the more regular distribution of justice, on the

principles of the Turkish law, which now prevails; and for what they prize even more highly, a greater diffusion of what most of them now believe to be the true pathway to heaven, the Mussulman faith!

20th.—Shortly after my above-mentioned visit to the wrecks near Sashe, I learned that the vessel which the Russians were then repairing had been set fire to during the night by four individuals, two nobles and two of inferior rank, who took with them bundles of dry hay, &c., for the purpose. The light however alarmed the garrison of the fort above before they could escape, and one of them was wounded by a cannon-ball.

Two other instances of devotion have just occurred. The stockade above the fort of Sashe has, as I expected, been abandoned. Hadji Dakhûm-okû, therefore, very incautiously set to work almost alone to fire upon the fort from one of the adjoining hills with the smallest cannon, when a large body of Russians with colours flying, supposed to comprise almost the entire garrison, made a sudden sortie towards him. He cried aloud for assistance, and fortunately was heard by some persons who were not far distant, and who arrived in time sufficient to rescue the piece, in doing which however the hadji and several others were wounded. This party say that, while thus engaged, they observed a tokav of the neighbourhood who was in advance of them, and at one side of the advancing body of Russians, draw his sabre and rush alone into the midst of it. He was atalik of my host's second daughter, and a person of singular intrepidity. He had been wounded on the head by a

ball only an hour before, and was no sooner bandaged than he engaged ten or twelve others to perform with him this feat of devotion, saying; "Better to effect something and perish, than be subdued like women." At the subsequent exchange of dead, the Russians said that, unless they had witnessed his prowess and hardihood, they could not have believed in them.

Since that affair at the wrecks, when the Russian corpses were left on the beach, the Circassian chiefs demanded my opinion as to arranging for a regular exchange of dead, which now takes place.

LETTER XXII.

A FIRMAN FROM THE PORTE—RENEWAL OF FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE WITH THE CHIEFS OF THE NORTH —EMIGRATION FROM KABARDA TO ABAZAK—NEWS FROM ABAZAK—RUSSIAN PICKPOCKETS—SICKNESS IN THE RUSSIAN ARMY—INTIMATION FROM THE RUSSIANS THAT THE AGGRESSIVE MEASURES OF THE CAMPAIGN ARE AT AN END—PROGRESS OF THE NATIONAL OATH AMONG THE TRIBES OF CAUCASUS.

SASHE, *July* 16, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. According to the great French master of the art of war, the importance of the moral in comparison with the physical condition of an army is as three to one. The moral condition of the Russian force here cannot be good, as is proved to us not only by the very frequent desertions from it, but by the communications we have received otherwise. First, the Georgians found means to let us know that they had heard a report of a revolt having broken out in their country [what men wish they readily believe]. Then the Kabardans informed us that there were good hopes of the Russians being eventually foiled in their present attempts against this coast; and now we learn that the Azras have refused to fight in consequence of their having heard that a firman from the Sultan has been received on the coast. Indeed the non-participation of the Kabardans and Azras in many of the late affairs had, before

any communications were received, been made a subject of remark by the Circassians.

As to the document in question (whether a firman or not) it was brought to Jankhoti, near Pshat, ten or twelve days since, by Hasesh, who formed one of the deputation to Daûd Bey, which I met on my arrival on the coast last year; and whose departure was on that account deferred. Hasesh having proceeded alone to Constantinople with letters, he has remained there ever since, and reports that in bringing this firman, and an immense load of letters, his orders were to proceed to Trebizond, and obtain the aid of the Pasha there, in procuring him a good vessel and speedy despatch, and to return also in the shortest possible time. This dignitary however detained him *two months* at Trebizond; and I am now curious to know the purport of the document, as from it one may conjecture at least whether the delay at Tribizond should be attributed to mere negligence, or to the industrious agency of the consuls of Russia, working on a mercenary or timid Pasha; for these two months, be it observed, were of most critical importance to that power in her endeavour to procure the submission of the people of the coast, and her servants here have exerted themselves unusually to turn them to account. We are told here that directions accompany this "firman," desiring that its seals should not be broken until deputies be assembled from all the Mussulman populations of the Caucasus. Bokhundûr, in the province of Shapsuk, has been designated as the place of this august assembly, for which deputies set forth from this district four days ago. The most intense and lively

interest is excited everywhere along the coast by this unexpected event, and this interest has been increased by letters accompanying the firman, which express a hope that the Circassians "will not long be left to draw the trigger alone," and encourage them otherwise not to despond. These letters are neither signed nor signetted; and the people here are at a loss to conjecture who may have sent them, or what faith to attach to them. I have hinted to them that at all events they have not emanated from persons unfriendly to them, as the counsel they give is precisely the reverse of that contained in the letters of the Russian generals. Letters from Sefir Bey have also been received by the same opportunity, which again recommend strongly to his countrymen the friendly treatment of us Englishmen. I am now however the only one left to benefit by this; for I find by a letter I have just received that Mr. L—— sailed by a vessel from Semez, a month ago. In this letter Mr. L—— repeats to me the regret expressed by the people in the north at the eccentric treatment of me by old Shamuz, and their earnest desire and his advice that I should again visit them before leaving the country, in order that they might endeavour to efface the bad impression which I may otherwise carry hence. It is not however in my power to comply with this kind desire, as I expect daily the return to this quarter of my Constantinople messenger with letters, my anxiety about which is now painfully extreme; but I wrote the people in the north in terms of gratitude for the kindness shown my countrymen and me; recommending them at the same time to complete the administration of the

national oath, and to adjust the affair of the Abbats and Janats. I think I mentioned the interview I had last winter with Mensûr, about—among other things—the expatriation of these two noble septs, and their numerous adherents, when I represented to him the extreme inexpediency of allowing these people to remain in that island in the Kûban—where they may serve as spies or intermediaries for treason; over and above the annoyance they give in the hostilities carried on against their neighbours on this side—and suggested that it should immediately be taken into consideration, either to drive them at once from their position, or to invite them to return among their countrymen on a bond of mutual oblivion of injuries. Mensûr at once adopted these views, and sent a message in accordance with them to the oath-administering congress, then assembled in Shapsuk; but our (temporary) explosion with Judge Mehmet suspended our participation in this and other affairs. I am happy to learn however by the letter just received, that this important affair has been set about in earnest, and that hopes are entertained of its being brought to the desired issue—the return of the exiles.

I should not have believed in the possibility of Turkish vessels ceasing to come, unless it had happened; for the forts are almost *nil*, in regard to the prevention of trade; and the cruisers but a degree better—as they have not made one capture this season—while the employment of steamers on this coast I consider as merely temporary, or perhaps henceforth occasional. But, six weeks or two months since, there appeared to be such a suspense in the

arrival of Turkish vessels, that the fears expressed by my servants—of being left in the lurch—were not without influence on me; and made me look forward to the possibility of the stoppage of the Turkish trade; of my own other expectations not being realised, and of our thus being left in a predicament of no little embarrassment, the only apparent outlet from which was making our escape across the sea in an open boat belonging to Hassan Bey, the rigging of which we got in repair to be in readiness for this alternative.

The storm of last month first brightened the prospect, and all apprehensions are now dispelled by the arrival of a number of vessels on the coast to the northward; of one (for the first time in that neighbourhood) near Ghagra; and by the reports they bring of many others having been about to follow them.

Our friends in the north (as I learned on the 13th) have performed another exploit against the Russian colonial system, which—with its other mishaps, and the bad faith of the imperial partner—should go well nigh to ruin it. Towards the large lake near the mouth of the Kûban, called Ak-deñiz (the white sea), there is an extensive plain which, on account of its distance from any defensible places, and its proximity to a fort the Russians have established on the coast there, has been abandoned by the inhabitants, who derived little advantage from it beyond an occasional grazing and hay-making. Even of the latter the Russians had sought to deprive them, and had marched thither a number of their colonists, with ox-waggons, to drive away the grass

as soon as cut. Three bodies of infantry, with four pieces of cannon, were in attendance to protect the labourers; but the Circassians, so soon as they understood the nature of the arrangements, took measures to defeat them. Five hundred horsemen assembled overnight, and having taken their several stations, where they could not be perceived, there waited until the people were set to work, when they dashed forward amongst them, and carried off thirty-two men and women and eighty head of oxen, before the troops could close to their rescue. Only three Circassians were wounded in this exploit, which was conducted by the indefatigable Mensûr, although his severely ulcerated foot be still unhealed.

On the 8th, and two or three days subsequently, I was honoured by visits of Hadji Jansit-okû, formerly a chief of considerable influence and wealth in the Kabardas, and who, along with Beislam-okû, a chief of still higher, that is, princely rank, and many others, constituting a colony of sixty families, have lately abandoned their property and hereditary possessions in that province, on account of the military control there exercised by the Russians, and fixed themselves in Abazak, whither very many of their serfs have from time to time found their way to join them. I had heard much of the fine race of Kabardan Circassians, and Jansit-okû fully met my expectations, possessing as he does, in addition to the national characteristics of height, symmetry, agility, and muscle, a physiognomy of manly beauty, liveliness, and intelligence, and a deportment of native nobility. He told me he had been commissioned by his neigh-

bours, on coming to the coast, to see me and learn my news, and I was happy in having it still in my power to present him—in proof of his having executed this portion of his errand—with an English telescope, for which he seemed to be exceedingly grateful, this being an instrument in high estimation, and which his present circumstances, I presume, do not enable him to purchase. Hassan Bey appeared to think his hamlet highly honoured (now for the first time) by this chief, of whose loyalty and singular intrepidity he had often heard. The following may serve as an instance:—Last year, in coming from Turkey, he, along with twelve others, merchants, &c., was put on shore, through an error of the captain, on the southern instead of the northern side of Ghagra, and at no great distance from one of the forts which the Russians have there constructed. So soon as they were discovered on the beach, a large force, which it was hopeless to think of vanquishing, came down to capture them; the gallant few, however, determined not to be taken alive. Under Jansit-okû's directions, therefore, they formed a rampart with bales of merchandise, and behind these they kept their enemies at bay until they themselves all fell. The Hadji along with the rest was left for dead upon the beach, but he and another, though severely, had not been mortally wounded; and having recovered sensation and strength sufficient, they contrived to crawl into the woods during the ensuing night, and subsequently, by the aid of the natives, to make their way across the central mountains to their homes in Abazak.

He confirmed the reports I have so often heard—of the intensity of interest felt throughout the internal provinces in the existing struggle for independence, and of the hope that had latterly arisen that this would at length be achieved through the intervention of England; in which case, he said, he was certain that all those who had discontinued the war would instantly fly to arms, the spirit of hostility to their invaders having increased yearly with their knowledge of the nature of Russian supremacy. It was to him, by-the-by, that the Kabardans in the army at Sashe gave encouragement for the continuance of the war, as I have mentioned. While he was still in conversation with his friends, word was brought him that one of the general officers, a Russian, wished to have some conversation with him; and this personage soon after approaching, the Hadji sprung on his horse and galloped off. He had obtained permission for this interview from the chiefs and people at Sashe; and such interviews the Russians it would appear readily permit, in the hope probably of treason being thereby promoted.

In the course of conversation, Jansit-okû informed us that in Abazak they had lately detained two suspected persons, one of whom they have since discovered to be a secretary of Baron Rosen, who had learned to speak Circassian, and was travelling through the country in the guise of a native—no doubt for the purpose of making military remarks upon it. He is now however in safe custody; viz. that of this noble, who keeps him chained; and in this state it is probable he will remain, notwithstand-

ing the munificent offer for his liberation which the Baron has made.

25th.—On the 17th we heard here of a large assemblage of Russian vessels at Toapse; and for some days subsequently the people of the coast in different quarters were alarmed by their cruising about: so that uncertainty prevailed as to the locality of the intended attack. The doubt has however been solved; for we have just learned that twenty-five vessels, great and small, were assembled at Shapsekwa, very early in the morning of Sunday last the 22nd, when they immediately debarked their troops and artillery, encountering little or no opposition that we have heard of. Indeed that échelle in particular admits of very little; for the valley opens towards the sea in great breadth, and there is a wide expanse of level sand. The Russians have thus shown more energy than I gave them credit for, and they appear to have justly appreciated the moral effect which would have arisen to their prejudice, through any intermission they might have allowed to appear in their warfare, in consequence of their losses by the storm of last month. Sûbesh, a few hours north of this, or Waïa, a few hours further, are the points at which I think they may be next expected, as they offer, upon the whole, greater advantages for a fort than any of the remaining localities. At the former, however, a good reception is prepared for them.

3rd August.—Early this morning, to my surprise, was announced to me the return of the deputies who had been sent to Bokhudûr, to hear the so-called

firman and the letters of Sefir Bey read; and who had received instructions from the chiefs in the north to call on me in passing, and communicate the purport of them, which however has got so disfigured in the carriage through the incessant repetitions these persons had to make of it to curious multitudes on their way, that I find some difficulty in making out the probable meanings of the different documents: for accompanying the Turkish firman, there is said to be a firman from England also (!) and in the accounts given me simultaneously of these and of Sefir Bey's letters, I had much to do to prevent the confounding of their contents. I hope I may yet have an opportunity of getting copies of these two remarkable state papers, and shall therefore allude to them but generally at present. The intent of the Turkish one (the most correctly reported of the three I believe), or of explanations sent along with it, appears to be—to excuse to the people of the Caucasus the fictitious cession of their territories into which the Porte was forced by Russia, who had acquired at the time such ascendancy as to make it absolutely inevitable for the Sultan to comply with her dictates:—to prove however that his affection for them remains unaltered;—to promote their reunion by exhorting them to abstain from hostilities against the people of such provinces as have made terms with Russia, as doubtless they did so only from necessity, and would gladly join in the war if enabled to do so;—*to prevail on them to abandon the selling of their serfs* to merchants;—to encourage them to continue the war, yet prudently; that is, not attempting to storm the fortresses, but

attacking the Russians when they come out of them; —to prove to them the good hope there now is of Turkey being enabled to rescue them, as England and all the other powers are favourable to her, while Russia stands alone;—to ascertain from them whether in case their rescue be undertaken, they will consent to bear the expense of the war, or if it be borne by Turkey, they will consent that their provinces shall become integral portions of her empire, "like Rûmeli and Natoli *."

The chiefs of the north told my informants, that they hoped soon to see me and show me the English firman, for which reason the accounts sent me are rather meagre; viz. that it impresses upon the Circassians the necessity of their acting in unison with Turkey, and of affording protection to British commerce and hospitality to British subjects, not only those who are now among them, but such as may in future arrive. Upon the latter subject, the letter of Sefir Bey, I am told, dwells with much emphasis, in consequence of which the chiefs of the north have sent an urgent charge to those here (luckily it is quite uncalled for) to treat me with every respect and attention.

Hasesh, upon being asked to do so, swore to the genuineness of all these documents, which have thus obtained full credence from the chiefs and people of

* Although I afterwards got a portion at least of these documents [translations of which will be found in the Appendix], yet I think it expedient to retain the memoranda I made at this time of the reports of their contents, as showing in what manner they were reported to, and understood by, the people.

this country, an immense assemblage of whom—four or five thousand it is said—took place at Bokhundûr for the purpose of hearing and replying to them. The reading alone occupied three entire days, the people having been ranged in ranks, and sentence by sentence thus passed along them. The reply was short and comprehensive; viz. that all that Turkey and England might wish, the people of this country are ready to comply with, and would gladly rank themselves as Turkish subjects, provided they were saved out of the hands of Russia. To this reply about 1000 signatures were speedily appended!

4th.—Long before sunrise this morning, my rural sanctum, the orchard, was invaded by my Pole coming to awake and inform me of the arrival of a Turkish vessel, a messenger from which had come to beg the attendance of Hassan Bey; and he and I, after partaking of some refreshment (bread, honey, and brandy—ye curious!) set forth with a numerous escort. We proceeded a few miles along the coast, northward, and there found anchored a neat little brig from Samsûn, the cargo of which; viz. live stock and bale-goods, was already almost all landed. Among the passengers I observed two females, one between thirty and forty, and the other about ten years younger. They were dressed in handsome parajas and snowy veils, and appeared in high glee—especially the youngest, as she sprung from the shoulders of the man who carried her through the surf, and found herself firm on her native soil—for she and her companion were returning home, having been liberated by the Turks to whom they

had been sold. Such occurrences are very frequent with both men and women; indeed I understand it to be general among the Turks not to retain those thus purchased, even Russians and Poles, in servitude beyond a very few years. After the debarkation mentioned, the brig was moored opposite our valley, and had commenced discharging her salt (about 300 kilos) by trips of the boat and portage of the bags on men's shoulders through the surf, when I left her.

The news this vessel brings me is not a little annoying; viz. that the messenger whom I sent to Constantinople for my letters had returned to Sinope a month ago, and that the vessel, on board of which he intended sailing thence, was supposed to have put to sea shortly afterwards, in which case, not having arrived, it is to be feared she may have been wrecked or may have foundered in the gales, which forced this other vessel to put back, and which proved fatal to very many small craft on the Asiatic coast. It is further reported that, on Arif's* arrival at Sinope from this coast, he and Andrea, a discarded domestic of Mr. U., who has latterly been converted into a Russian hireling or spy, had slept alone in a coffee-room there, when the latter during the night got access to Arif's luggage or pockets, and taking thence my packets had extracted the letters, supplying their place with other paper, and after resealing the packets had replaced them so that Arif knew nothing of the theft till he arrived at Constantinople. As to the letters, I am told our consul at Trebizond

* A Lazistan captain, to whom I entrusted our letters after the death of Nadir Bey's dragoman.

informed my countryman, Mr. L., on his arrival there, that they were in the possession of the consul for Russia! Perhaps, therefore, they too have been honoured by the comments of the St. Petersburg Gazette, in like manner with those so meanly got possession of from the captain of the Vixen by the Russian authorities at Sevastopol. The tricks and petty plottings of these imperial functionaries would really almost degrade the meanest-of-all-possible of pettifogging attorneys or brokers. Andrea, who seems every way worthy of the service he has been received into, employed himself further at Sinope and Samsûn in attempting to browbeat the Turks, and discourage and frighten the Circassians in regard to Circassian politics and trade; and otherwise gave such offence that (it is said) he was thrown into jail and loaded with irons. Let us see if the Russians will have the effrontery to claim him as under their sacred protection! * But, alas, this venting of my spleen does not mend my case; viz. the loss formerly of the originals, and now of the duplicates, of two very long letters on the affairs of this country, and of many others, both of general and private interest. The recurrence of such acts on the part of such wretches as this Andrea, cannot be prevented, but by striking at the root of the evil, by taking such measures with their masters, as may prove to the government of Russia, that it will not be per-

* Not only was he not thrown into jail, as had been reported; but, although I caused application for redress to be made to the English authorities, I obtained none: and as for Andrea, he has since been rewarded for his theft by being appointed, as I have said, dragoman to the Russian general on the Circassian coast. The establishment of an English consul at Sinope is much wanted.

mitted thus to anticipate its domination in Turkey, by violating the property and rights of individuals who owe to its Emperor no allegiance.

Of late we have had a good deal of heavy rain, one consequence of which seems to be that the soldiers labouring in the wet ditches of the works at Toapse, and badly fed as they always are, have got dysentery to such an alarming extent that the construction of the fort has been in a great measure suspended, and the Circassians are planning a strong attack upon the invalided army.

7th.—Yesterday I had again a visit from *Barzek* Hûssein, one of the deputies who was sent to the north to hear the firman read. He tells me that the Pasha of Trebizond sent by Hasesh a letter from himself addressed to the Circassians, in which he reproaches them for continuing the war, and counsels them forthwith to submit to Russia! This appears to me to strengthen the suspicions I conceived of his having been bought by the Russians. Hûssein further informed me, that the friendship now expressed for me by the people in the north is unbounded; that he was requested by "hundreds of men, women, and children," of whom he knows nothing, to present me their respects, and to state that if I choose to go there "not one, but a hundred thousand houses, are open to receive me." While Shamuz among the various excuses he assigns for his conduct to me says, like a convalescent Quixote, that in the frame of mind he was then in, "one takes trees for enemies." Osman also, Mr. L.'s servant, who brought me his letter, says he was desired to invite me to attend the great congress

for the reading of the firman, and upon objecting that the message might appear to me not sufficiently well authenticated, another man was sent on purpose, who came as far as Waïa; there, however, he met the deputies going to the congress, and fearful I presume of losing his share in the exciting scene, and this being a land of freedom, where every man does as he pleases, he turned along with them. I regret this "contretems" on several accounts; but chiefly that it has prevented me at once satisfying *myself* of the nature and authenticity of these remarkable documents—the firman and accompanying letters—and being witness of the manner in which they are received. Osman has promised to do his best to bring them to me, but I fear I shall have to wait some time, as it is said that a deputation has set forth to communicate them to the people of the interior, as far as Karatshaï.

14*th*.—Three large ships which passed to the southward close by the fort of Sashe some days since, and saluted or made signal to it, having yesterday returned there and cast anchor, with about nine other vessels, brigs, &c., the people of this valley (and of others, no doubt) took alarm at the assemblage of such a force in their near neighbourhood. A party of us assembled on the hill to reconnoitre it, and found by our glasses that the larger ones were a two-decker and two frigates. Another attack on some of the échelles was inferred to be in preparation. We of this hamlet were, however, relieved from anxiety in this respect by the arrival late in the evening of Omar Bey, a chief from towards Ghagra, who in passing Sashe had paid a visit—by permission of the

chiefs there—to his father-in-law, a chief from near Sûkûm-kaleh, who has been obliged to enter the Russian service, in which he holds grade as lieutenant-colonel. Upon being asked the cause of the assemblage of shipping, he desired Omar to tell Hassan Bey and the rest not to feel any anxiety on that account, as the campaign was closed, and nothing further to be undertaken than the completion of the three forts at Sashe, Toapse, and Shapsekwa; part of the shipping, he said, had brought troops to replace the Georgians and Azras, who were to be sent home immediately, as the bargain with them was for a month's service, and it is now nearly *four* since they entered. Does Russia make such bargains with her Polish, or any other of her subjects? Is not here proof sufficient of the temporizing policy she judges it necessary still to employ, even with those Caucasians who are already in her power?

But I was still better pleased to learn from Omar Bey, who was employed in, and has just returned from, the mission accross the mountains to the districts inland from Sûkûm-kaleh, that it has been completely successful; the people there, who, from the inaccesible nature of their country, are completely out of the control of the Russians, having adopted the national oath with enthusiasm, and immediately put it in train of administration. Many thousands have already taken it; and the people sent back word by the missionaries, that if their countrymen of this side will aid them with two or three thousand men, they will immediately fall upon the Russians and their allies on the coast, and destroy Sûkûm-kaleh.

The people here, however, decided not to second this proposal, because the firman has advised them not to make enemies of those who are involuntarily allied to the Russians. I think great results may be expected from this policy: it has always been my advice to the people here, but I doubt whether its expediency might have prevailed over their hereditary love of warfare, had it not been thus powerfully proved to them. I view the present rapid progression of this great measure—the administration of the national oath—with peculiar satisfaction, as an achievement of us Englishmen; for although it originated with the Circassians thirty years ago, it had since been allowed to sleep, and its revival and present efficacy —both as a measure of war and government—is attributable and attributed solely to the visits and exhortations of Mr. Urquhart, and those of us who have followed in his footsteps.

I now get so used to my life in this country that many items of it and incidents in it are apt to escape me, although I doubt not they might be thought sufficiently remarkable by others. During almost the whole four months I have been in this valley, I have slept alone out of doors; first under a great pear-tree, on a green within the enclosure of this hamlet, and latterly on a stage, which Hassan Bey, of his own accord, ordered to be erected for me in an orchard, slightly enclosed, and which overhangs a deeply-wooded glen. This glen communicates with the valley, in which there are no houses all the way to the sea. On my couch, on this stage (which in fine weather such as we generally have, is my house) sundry

articles of high value here, such as my watch, silver snuff-box, silver-mounted dagger, knives, &c., lie throughout the day frequently (during my walks for exercise) quite unprotected; and at night, the four plum-trees which form my leafy shelter are hung with my clothes and other appurtenances; yet have I never missed a single article, although my retreat is well known to all the neighbours round; groups of whom, and of strangers, almost daily seat themselves on the grass around me. Nor must it be forgotten that my person also is of no little value, on account of the price set upon it by the munificent offer of the Russian general in the neighbourhood.

Stealing in one's own neighbourhood, even before the administration of the oath, was considered an indelible disgrace, and visited, when discovered, with severe penalties; even death, when the offender was found incorrigible. It is only stealing in a remote quarter which continues to be looked upon by many as an act of courage and adroitness; and thus *Barzek** Alkhaz-okû Beislam (a noble of this neighbourhood, so respected and so active in exciting the people here and in Abazak against the Russians that I intrusted to him a copy of Daûd Bey's address for being read in that province and those adjoining it) was here lately endeavouring to find associates for an expedition to a secret quarter (the people of which are subject to or on terms with the Russians), where he thinks plunder may be made. But the

* I have lately discovered that the name of one's fraternity is often for distinction prefixed to his own names. When I make use of the former hereafter it will be given in *italics*.

individuals *most* respected—such for instance as Dakhûm-okû, and Jeriko-okû, here; Kehri-kû, Haûd-okû, &c. in the north—are those who have long since renounced all such practices. They had, however, long before been on the wane, and the general administration of the oath (if the *firman* do not) must soon finally extinguish them.

A custom—much more noxious in its effects now-a-days, however mercifully intended at its institution, and one which if not put an end to must materially obstruct the moral amelioration of the country—still prevails; viz. that of the provinces, or even unallied fraternities in the same province, affording sanctuary and protection to the criminals of each other. Thus, during a late visit I made to a noble at Sûbesh, among the numerous patients brought me was a man of a valley a day or two's journey to the north, who was found to be so incorrigible a thief among his neighbours that they resolved to seize and punish him. At the head of the party who approached him for this purpose was a noble of high character, whom he shot dead, and having escaped, he now enjoys a sanctuary at the hamlet of a respected armorer at Sûbesh; and that which shows the complete recognition of the principle is, that this armorer incurs no danger whatever in visiting the neighbourhood where the murder was committed. I could not but regret the perversion of this man's character in particular, as his figure, features, and even expression of features, were all remarkably fine. He was suffering from a severe attack of jaundice, superinduced probably by the workings of his mind; for he had been

forced to abandon his wife, family, and property, and the thought of this perhaps weighed more with him than the crime.

Hadji Dakhûm-okû, just mentioned, belongs to the sept Barzek, the most numerous on the whole coast. It contains about four hundred families of nobles, and they possess each generally from five to twenty families of serfs, all the adult males of whom they keep armed. One individual in particular can bring into the field one hundred and fifty armed men. This sept is famed moreover for its courage and hostility to the Russians; and it may be seen from what I have stated that it can muster against them a force of two or three thousand men. It is allied to the equally eminent sept Tshûpako of the north, forming thus a most powerful fraternity.

The Hadji and a large proportion of his sept inhabit the lofty district called Ubûkh, which extends from the chief mountain-range to about the parallel of Vardan, forming thus the root of the north-west offshoot of mountains. From this impregnable stronghold the Hadji and his clan are always ready to rush forth, like one of their winter torrents, to repel the enemy, or to take vengeance on traitors.

15*th*.—Omar, a respectable and wealthy old Turk of Psekha, paid me a visit yesterday afternoon. He has had experience of warfare in Turkey, and speaks in terms of high admiration of the rapidity with which the people of this part of the coast have accustomed themselves to attack regular troops. On that occasion at Sashe in which the Hadji Dakhûm-okû was wounded, and when almost the entire garrison,

with colours flying, had sallied out from the fort to capture him and the small brass cannon he was firing, he says that about one hundred men assembled immediately, and charged the Russians with such gallantry, advancing to within five or six paces of them before firing their rifles, and producing such consternation, that he really believes if there had been but a few more of them they would have captured the colours. He had formed the same opinion as Pallas did of the Kabardans half a century ago—that, with a little discipline, the Circassians would become the best and most formidable (light) soldiery in the world.

In the affair alluded to, it appears that the small brass gun (which is eminently prized among the people of Sashe) got split by a cannon-ball; yet, not despairing of making it perform further service, they are just now busy hooping it with some of the iron they found in the wrecked vessels of the Russians.

As yet iron is in very great demand all along the coast; but if it be not speedily and regularly supplied from abroad, I believe the people of the coast will soon learn to supply themselves. Iron-stone is abundant in many places; the art of smelting it is known; and in the province of Abazak almost enough iron is already made to supply the whole of the home consumption.

LETTER XXIII.

JOURNEY TO THE NORTH—INEFFECTUAL SEARCH FOR A POLISH NOBLE — THE SUPPOSED FIRMAN FROM THE PORTE—WORSHIP OF THE CROSS—WORSHIP OF TSHIBLE, THE SPIRIT OF THUNDER—HOSPITALITY —DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE CIRCASSIANS—RUMOURS OF WAR—SABINE MARRIAGE—DENOUEMENT OF THE SEARCH FOR THE NOBLE—OPENING FOR MISSIONARIES.

PSEOMUZ, *near* PSHAT, 22*d August*, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. As the period is approaching at which I have determined to leave this country, in case the messenger to Constantinople for my English letters shall not have returned, nor anything else have occurred to satisfy me as to what is being done for it elsewhere, or as to the further utility of my remaining in it,—I set out from Khissa on the 16th, in the hope of seeing the firman and English letters said to have been brought by Hasesh, and of finding in them something to steer by through this fog of ignorance. His vessel being close to this place, and himself expected to arrive and sail by her in the course of two or three days, I remain here writing letters to go by him, and have sent my dragoman to Judge Mehmet for the firman and English letter, copies of which I purpose taking to the people in the south, the faith of some of whom began to cool after the first glow.

The journey has afforded me nothing very re-

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G. Barnard, lith. from a Sketch by Jal Stanislaus Bell, Esq.

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TOAPSE.

markable. The weather of this summer among the mountains to the south I have found much more subject (than that of the last, which I spent in the north) to heavy rain; my diary shows rain to have occurred eight-and-twenty times (once within the twenty-four hours) since the beginning of June, including storms on the nights of 11th June and 27th July, besides others of less note. In consequence, the herbage has hitherto preserved a freshness and verdure one little expects to see in that latitude, and in the native places of the fig, vine, and peach. One of the lesser storms detained me half a day at Shimtoatsh, and had lasted throughout the preceding night, in consequence of which it was predicted that the "River of Blood" would be unfordable. It looked dark and angry enough, and proved too strong for the small horse I rode, at the bad ford selected by my guide; yet, by swimming, he made his way to the bank, costing me only a drenching, which, among these hardy sons of the road, goes for nothing, and produces only a smile. The Waïa, as we approached it, was represented to me by my escort as infinitely more to be dreaded, on account of its greater rapidity; but I found less difficulty with it than with its neighbour the Ashe—probably the preceding storm had been partial. In fact all these mountain streams, especially those to the south, should not be crossed by strangers immediately after heavy rains, unless they are accompanied by an experienced guide. The next difficulty I experienced (and it was greater than that of the rivers) was to make Hadji Ismael, the thoughtless (and I believe brave) Anapali, who had me in charge,

comprehend that it was by no means necessary, and—as I was the only English link now left them—still less expedient, that I should be carried within point-blank range of the guns of all the forts we passed. The first demur upon this subject occurred at Toapse, where I found him (instead of leading us off through a glen in the hills about which he had gotten directions from a peasant) proceeding along the beach direct for the fort, near which—that is, within rifle range—I had seen with the glass, under shelter, and on the top of a hillock, a number of men on foot, whom I thought Russians, like many on the beach beyond them, about whom there was no doubt. The former proved, however, to be Circassians; and the argument, that the road by the face of the hill, over against the fort, was safe, because many others had passed it without harm, was so pertinaciously stuck to by our conductor, that at length, through a weak shame (as I must now own), I gave up opposition to him, and was already nearly arrived at the hillock, when I was called back, in consequence of the report of a mounted Circassian who met our party and stated, that the Russians generally allowed individuals shabbily dressed to pass, but that the guard was provided with a telescope, and whenever a person was seen whose dress and arms had (as they imagined) the appearance of those of a chief, he was immediately fired upon. This being my case, (and that of my dragoman also,) the glen-road was immediately adopted, and to my satisfaction, as it afforded a most picturesque view of the fort, of which, perhaps, the sketch I took may convey to you some idea.

At Makupse, where we passed a night, I had another proof of the generous confidence reposed in us English by the Turkish merchants. Hadji Mûstafa-oghlû Ghenjaga, of Topkhana, being there on trade, and having learned that, my means being nearly exhausted, I was desirous of finding so much as might enable me to purchase the freedom of a Polish nobleman of high grade, who was said to have deserted from the Russian ranks, he had reserved for me merchandise to six or seven times the amount of what I wanted, and appeared urgent that I should accept the whole; but having other friends, I declined his kind offers, because I found that it would prevent him making an investment, that is, buying another serf-girl, to add to the half-dozen *happy* creatures who were lodged in the apartment adjoining that which I occupied, a small door communicating between the two, through which their merriment was heard till a late hour at night.

The reception given me by this Hadji (a lively, active, elderly man, with a somewhat lordly air), although I and my people arrived quite unexpectedly and late in the evening at the already crowded hamlet, was altogether characterised by prompt hospitality, and even friendliness. Not having been able to find me silk to make an anteri (as I had begged of him previously), he brought forth a handsome one that had just been made for himself by the young damsels, and he gave it me so like one used to give, that I feared refusing it might offend him; and I must trust to finding a future opportunity of making him a suitable return.

The hamlet at Makupse is charmingly situated (for a summer residence), amid corn-fields, and clumps of oak forest, on the slope rising above a precipice towards the sea, of which there is a wide and refreshing prospect—highly agreeable amid the heat which now prevails by day.

In passing through the neighbourhood of Toapse, I made inquiry as to the remissness that had been remarked there, ever since the landing of the Russians, and found that it was occasioned by the treacherous agency of a member of the Tshûpako fraternity, of whom I have since heard a very bad character. He is debarred from the houses of his fraternity, and it was promised me to-day, by Ïïdarokû Noghaï, to whom I made a pretty strong representation upon the subject, that now that the oath had been administered in that neighbourhood, I may soon expect to hear of the delinquencies of this individual having been tried, and adequately punished.

It is said that dysentery still prevails to a great extent in that garrison. There must be some such cause, or a remarkable relaxation of discipline; for individuals assert that they have scaled the walls of the fort by night, and perambulated it all without meeting a living soul; and yet the wooden barracks are not burned, nor the guns spiked! This must be remedied.

On the evening of the 19th in ascending the small valley of Kwaff to seek quarters for the night, I saw parties of people diverging from it for their homes. We then came to a lofty pole, which was firmly planted in the ground. On the upper end was trans-

fixed the head of a goat, whose skin stretched by sticks waved from the pole like a banner in the breeze,—close at hand were a sort of canopy formed by four poles, with a flat roof of branches and leaves thickly interwined, and a small circular inclosure of stout wicker-work. The latter I found to be the sacred spot on which the goat had received his blessed death by a thunder-bolt, while his mortal remains—saving the head and skin afore-mentioned—were inclosed in the roof of the canopy. Immediately adjoining these trophies, a large circular space of the grass trodden and withered, showed where the males and females of the neighbourhood had danced and feasted during the three preceding days, in commemoration of the honour conferred on this valley by Tshiblé, the spirit of thunder.

Although this relic of ancient superstition has gone out of respect in the more strictly Mussulman portions of the coast, yet the employment of the name of thunder, Tshiblé, as an asseveration in conversation, is common throughout the coast. From Pshat to Waïa, is the portion in which the greatest remains of Christianity mingled with such other rites, are still to be found. They are said to prevail on the coast of the Azras also.

As we ascended the wooded hills which adjoin Shapsekwa, in order to make a detour round the Russian force lately landed there, I was somewhat annoyed at being informed by a person we met, that the army had that morning advanced a long way into the interior. This unexpected news made us keep a good look out, wherever the forest per-

mitted, to see that we did not stumble upon some of the piquets. But this information, which appeared at first extraordinary, proved at length untrue; for on descending towards the valley, the whole army was to be seen in its original positions towards the sea. A few were encamped upon two neighbouring heights, which completely command the site where the fort is, I presume, to be erected; and the great body of the army was employed in a field below in making bricks, I believe, as I saw rows of them piled up to dry nearer the sea.

On crossing the valley I was gratified by seeing women, and even children, remaining in the hamlets at about a mile from the Russian outposts, and men much nearer engaged in their usual avocations, getting in the harvest, and treading out the corn with oxen; while the whole visible preparation—if even it were such—against any sudden attack of the Russian host, was a body of about fifty warriors seated beneath a tree!

At Jûbghe I found another friendly Turk, an old acquaintance, Sherîf, of whose kindness to me at Sinab I have formerly told you. His brother came forth from the hamlet they have occupied in trade for some months past, to receive me, and both pressed me with such urgent hospitality to spend the remainder of the day and sojourn a night with them, that I did so, hoping to find another coadjutor in the liberation of the Polish noble. And in this I was not disappointed, for Sherîf, so soon as he heard of my desire, readily undertook to make the purchase, and allow me to reimburse him afterwards. Next morning he

sent his host with me to make the necessary preliminary inquiries; and caution is requisite, for all the Poles desire to be bought and sent to Turkey; and if it were found out that one in particular was wanted, and still more by an Englishman, such is the general opinion of our wealth, and such the avidity of gain in the people, that the ransom would inevitably be raised to an inconvenient amount. In this affair I have encountered much difficulty and disappointment, which I shall note, in case I should not ultimately succeed, and may be blamed by any of the countrymen of this individual you may have told of the hope I had of rescuing him. It was Paulo who first told me of him, as having been offered to him at Agûia, but at so high a price that he could not think of giving it, ignorant as he then was of any means of procuring reimbursement. He said also that the Pole's owner at Agûia had afterwards taken him to Abazak, in part payment of a debt he owed there. Having afterwards found that *Shemit* Urûtshûk-okû Islam had many friends in that province, I requested him, when in the full tide of his gratitude for the cure of his wound, to effect the purchase for me. He readily undertook the matter, saying he should demand the Pole as a present, and had not a doubt he would readily be given as such if he were in Abazak; and that if he were still at Agûia and refused by his master there, he would have him carried off and afterwards make reimbursement. As this mode was only spoken of problematically, I made no remark upon it. Here matters rested, it being arranged that I should previously ascertain where the individual was, and what

was likely to be demanded for him. This I gave in charge to Veli, Paulo's servant, who had once seen the Pole, and who told me he had learned that he had been sold to a person at Shapsekwa. Veli was to leave this information at Makupse, where he waited the sailing of a vessel, and whither I was to send. When I arrived at Makupse he said he had hired a horse and been to Shapsekwa, where he found the residence and price of the Pole, which he specified, and I thought myself in full scent of what I desired. On my arrival at Agûia, however, I found that Veli had been after the wrong personage, so I sent my servant Stanislav a ride of an hour or two into the interior, where he learned the address of the right one (viz. at Shapsekwa) from his original proprietor, and that Paulo's statements had been untrue, as he had been offered to him for a trifle, that is, six pieces of merchandise, and was sold for ten. I was thus again in hopes of being on the right scent, and of effecting the purchase without being much obliged to any one. On approaching Shapsekwa, however, I learned from a man we met, that the Pole had been sold for twenty pieces to a person at Tshopsin, whose name we got. At Jûbghe I made with Sherif the arrangements I have mentioned, and the person he sent with me learned on the way that the family of the purchaser had just moved a considerable distance into the interior, but that the sons were engaged in constructing a tomb over their father's grave, at a spot nearly upon our route. On arriving there we found one of them so engaged; but he stated that his elder brother had sold the Pole on his way home, after his purchase, to

a person from Abazak, whom he met; that some angry words had taken place between them on that account, and that his brother had started for Vardan without having mentioned either the name of the person he had made the sale to, or the price he had obtained; and that he would not be back for seven or eight days. This man, however, offered, on his brother's return, to go into Abazak and bring the purchaser to Sherîf, stipulating for a hire of four pieces, to be paid only in case he were successful. To his offer I added another piece, and sent word to Sherîf, by his host, that I left it to him to give whatever price he found necessary. It remains to be seen what the result will be.

Sherîf, by-the-by, mentioned to me in the course of conversation a circumstance which, if true—and so far, at least, as his character is concerned I see no reason whatever to doubt it—shows in the Sultan and his counsellors a remarkably incorrect appreciation of the character of the policy and designs of Russia. He says that —— Pasha* (whom he bought here and sold in Turkey as a serf, and with whom, *consequently*, he is on terms of friendship and confidence) told him that, being on a mission into Russia, the year after the cession of Circassia, he was instructed to beg that that (iniquitous) transaction might be cancelled; but that the Emperor received the proposition with such strong marks of displeasure, saying, "it must not be spoken

* I suppress the name for obvious reasons—Constantinople and St. Petersburg being, in many respects, under the same *régime*.

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of, as it is totally *contrary to law*," that the Pasha was obliged to abandon it.

8th September.—The day before yesterday Luca returned from his mission, having been detained some time in order that he might be present at a congress of the chiefs and people (which had been appointed for the discussion of a contribution for raising funds to be sent to Sefir Bey, either for his own use, or for presentation to such Turkish grandees as he may think proper), and that he might carry a message from them in regard to the wish that has been expressed that I should again visit them.

In accordance with my instructions he wished to have avoided this delay, but the judge insisted upon it, and by withholding copies of the documents I wanted, at length obliged him to comply: but he had become so elated by the excitement in my favour he had witnessed, and the reception he had met on his visit, that it was with some difficulty I could get a consecutive and intelligible account of it, as he said a month would scarcely suffice for that purpose. To recount all the kind messages sent me would be tedious for you who do not know the senders, I shall therefore specify two as pre-eminent —that of old Tshûrûkh, the merchant at Aghsmûg, who says he will place any amount of goods I may wish at my disposal; and that of Az-demir, who said that if it should please me to remain with him ten years it would only give him the more pleasure; that every house in his hamlet is at my disposal, and if I shall fix upon that occupied by his wife and family, they shall be immediately removed to an-

other. Some said if I did not go "we should be enemies both in this world and the next;" while others talked of making a complaint on the subject at Constantinople (!) At the congress this subject, and Shamuz' conduct in connexion with it, having been discussed, there was a general exclamation in which both old and young joined, of "let him come back, let him come back, if it be only for a day or two!" The judge was then charged to write me an invitation, which he couched in very urgent terms. Shamuz has of course been placed in a very awkward predicament, by this setting in of the popular tide so strongly in my favour. He appears to have felt this fully, and has acted with the energy and sagacity I should have expected of him; having demanded that his conduct should be tried by a convention of seniors; that he may be punished, and demand pardon if found culpable; and if otherwise, that we may be restored to our former amity. This I fear, however, will be impossible, as his ill-humour (as he calls it) induced him to make misstatements, and to use threats, which I think it wrong to pass over lightly. He spent three days in Luca's company, endeavouring to explain away his misdemeanours, and to shift the blame partly on others; but Luca, according to my instructions, (for fear of his committing me in any way,) made him little other reply than what civility required. The greater portion of the excitement now prevailing in this affair (which I regard as national not personal, and have, therefore, acted with the greater circumspection) may be attributed to the native kindness

of the people and their sense of the injustice perpetrated against an individual whose sacrifices for their welfare they had confessed; against whom they have now found that there was no just cause of suspicion; and to whose endeavours they attribute, in a great measure, the great results they believe they have now in prospect. But another feeling I think influences a portion, at least, of the chiefs (viz. the Tshûpakos), who begin to fear, from my kind treatment and long stay in the south, lest any portion of their influence should be transferred through a prepossession against them, on my account, arising abroad.

Having, as I before stated, addressed a letter to the people of those parts, expressive of my attachment and gratitude for the general kindness of treatment we received from them; and that neither this feeling nor my future exertions for their welfare should be in any degree abated by the conduct of one individual, I think I have done all that is necessary as regards civility to the general body of the people. As for the Tshûpakos, in consideration of the sundry attempts at tutelage they made with us, I think they will be none the worse of discovering that it will be wise to abstain from such with any of my countrymen who may come among them in future. Mensûr, the effective leader in this society, has also given me further offence by having suppressed this letter, because I suppose it spoke so far to the detriment of one of his fraternity—it being by far too much the usage among them to stand by one another, right or wrong. Luca, however, fortunately ascertained this circumstance, reproached Mensûr for it before

the congress; and explained to them the tenor of the letter. I have sent another explanation both of the letter and of Mensûr's conduct by Tûghûz, who, I doubt not, will deliver it, as he and Shamuz are not on good terms. I shall not therefore go to the north, unless something in my own letters make it expedient. As to the firman and the letter from England, I find I have been again deceived, but it is in common with the whole people; the judge, and those who can read, having misrepresented the nature of the communication received, in order to give greater encouragement. Whence the document chiefly in question originated, I cannot pretend to determine. It was, however, brought to Sefir Bey at Adrianople, by my countryman Nadir Bey, and the term used by the former in his letter, conveys—so far as I know or can learn—the idea of its being the production of high dignitaries; but of what dignitaries I know not. It merely embodies suggestions as to the points upon which it is necessary that the Circassians should explain themselves fully in a reply—in accordance with the suggestions, or otherwise—which they are desired to send the Bey within a month, with the signatures of the chiefs of every province. I subjoin a copy of the answer delivered to Hasesh, which is in full and entire accordance with the purport of the suggestions, and which has now received many more signatures than I formerly mentioned. I subjoin also translations of the accompanying letter of Sefir Bey *, which will show

* Both translations will be found in the Appendix.

in part the cause of the great excitement now prevailing in my favour. You will also see that, in the accounts formerly given me of the contents of these documents, some communications which Hasesh was charged to deliver verbally, were mixed up with them.

The manner in which the raising of the funds to be sent to Sefir Bey has been arranged, shows with what earnestness and good faith the chiefs have set about preparing for the new political constitution they believe they have now in prospect. Such presentations have been frequently made before, but the funds for them, as well as for all other general purposes, were always raised by private and voluntary contributions. Now, however, an enumeration of families has been taken throughout the provinces, and the contribution of each (*amounting to about sixpence*) has been ascertained and levied accordingly, as an initiation of the people unto the payment of contributions for general purposes. The levying of such contributions will, I believe, notwithstanding its novelty, be found of more easy accomplishment than the abolition of the commerce in serfs; not only from the general and long prevalence of that trade, but also because the limited production and great difficulty of conveyance in the mountainous districts, especially towards the south, leave the people little other means of coming by the supplies of what they require from Turkey. I have, nevertheless, constantly argued against it as contrary to the religion they profess, and it seemed to me as if those I spoke with had all a sense of its impropriety. Yet I do not

believe that the practice will be effectually arrested until measures to that effect be taken in Turkey, by the closing of the market for slaves, and the infliction of penalties on captains who may import them*.

The following incident, so consonant with English feelings, of which Luca brought me word, I have great pleasure in recording. A man of Godowhaï at work in the forest committed an unnatural crime, (one naturalised in Russia). The family of the boy concerned became acquainted with the circumstance, and his brother immediately proceeded in search of the offender and shot him dead. His fraternity, in this *novel* predicament, demanded the price of his blood according to the established usage; but a special congress was assembled, at which it was decided that the conduct of the brother was justifiable and praiseworthy, and that not only should no compensation be exacted for the life of the culprit, but that it would be well that his effects were confiscated and his family dispersed, lest so foul an offence should recur among them through inheritance.

Reports are current from different quarters of the Russians having assembled a strong naval force at Sûkûm-Kaleh, and of war having broken out on the Asiatic frontier of Turkey or in Persia, but I doubt them as yet.

* I may remark in passing, that this long-established Turkish trade in Circassian slaves, is one of the irrefragable proofs that the Turkish government never considered Circassia as a portion of the Turkish empire; for no point of the Mussulman law is more explicit and more clearly and generally understood and adhered to, than that which forbids any subject of the Padisha being sold or held as a slave.

12*th*.—Luca has just been attending a celebration at one of the numerous crosses in this part of the country, each of which it appears has its special day. The rites appear to be a mixture of those of Christianity and of some other faith. On this occasion only about fifty persons were present, each of whom who is head of a family brought with him a table or tables for refreshments. Besides these two or three goats were sacrificed, lighted tapers being placed at their heads at the time, while others were placed on the cross. At a short distance from the latter the tables were arranged, and each person on passing them took off his bonnet; but no one approached the cross excepting some three or four individuals who said aloud a short prayer—an invocation to the Deity for the averting from them of war, pestilence, and every other evil, and sending them plenteous harvest and happiness. On approaching the cross and saying the prayer, one of these individuals held in one hand some of the eatables taken from the tables, and in the other a bowl of the national drink, shuat, which were then distributed among the congregation. A reaction in favour of this, their ancient religion, is, it appears, now prevalent, not only here, but in other localities towards the north; many of the people exclaiming, that it is since the neglect of its rites that all their present distress has come upon them. At Semez a similar but greater celebration of the rites consecrated to Tshiblé, the spirit of thunder, than what I before mentioned, has just been held, in consequence of three horses having been killed and a tree struck.

As my countrymen had cause for displeasure with some of the nobles in this part of the country—the Tshûpako Indar-okûs—on account of their rapacity for presents, I have taken up my residence during the last three weeks with one of the next class, that of the Thfokotls, and have every reason to be content. My host, Zekwahaz-okû Kirtsiz, when he learned I wished, if convenient, to be allowed to remain here some little time, not only expressed his satisfaction that it should be for years, but immediately moved me from the guest-house into a neat small one, next to his own, and in the midst of the others of his hamlet; and he has continued to treat me with an increase of assiduous attention. I am thus on the footing of the most intimate friendship, and if my position admitted of it—as it unfortunately does not—might be constantly in the society of all the families and females around me: as, however, so much of Circassian life is spent out of doors, I see enough to give me a shrewd idea of its nature.

Around me are the cots of four families (two of them those of widows) all, I believe, relatives, and who seem to live in perfect harmony. In the midst of our green is a long, lofty cot, appropriated to the major part of the cooking for the guest-house, &c., and for the sorting in rainy or sunny weather of the productions of the gardens around us. The chief peculiarities to be observed are that of the two girls—one of whom, though only sixteen, seems quite marriageable—receiving in the cots of their widowed mothers, both during the day and late in the evening, the visits of many men—young as well as old—who prefer these

to the other daughterless households; and with the most favoured among them there is observed but little of the decent reserve which the staid deportment of the Circassian girls when abroad would lead one to expect. I believe however that these young men are either cousins, or members of the same fraternity (amounting sometimes, as I have said, to thousands), with whom marriage is totally prohibited, and on whom, by Circassian *law*, these girls are expected to look as brothers, by which common appellation they are often spoken of. Nature thus set at defiance—in that permitted intimacy among cousins a hundred times removed—occasionally, however, vindicates her laws, and an escapade (to the protection of another distant fraternity) of two young folks thus left at liberty to win each other's affections, shows the futility of legislation at variance with her —to the amusing astonishment of the rest at such profligacy. I endeavoured to open the eyes of my host—who has, and who inherits, an excellent character—to the inexpediency of permitting such excessive freedom of intercourse between the young people; but he appeared to think the subject of no importance, and answered by "moving the previous question."

The grown brothers of both the girls sleep in the same chamber with them and their mothers. It must be recollected, however, that Asiatics throw off only their upper garments at night.

The families of this hamlet appear very industrious and well-doing: the men attend to the horses and agriculture; the more aged women to the dairy concerns, the cooking and gardening, and the prepara-

tion of wool, flax, and hemp for clothing; while the girls are as busily employed in sewing, washing, spinning, weaving, &c.

A matron on a visit here frequently pays the girls a visit; and I observe when she approaches, whether they be seated before the cottage or inside of it, they invariably rise (intimates and relatives as they are) and remain standing till she seats herself. The same respect is shown to the male visitors when they enter the cottage, and to me when I pass even at some distance from its window. Before my cot is the direct path between two of the others; but it is at present seldom used by the females, who make an awkward detour by the back of my house, in compliance with the etiquette of not passing in front of men: on which account the two girls on retiring from paying me a visit one morning, paused till some men standing near the door moved forward to make room for passing behind them. One or other of these girls invariably, and sometimes all our females, accompany such female visitors as they have to the confines of the terrritory of the hamlet; and a young one—married or unmarried—is never allowed to go home alone.

From all I have seen I feel inclined to pronounce the Circassians in the aggregate, the most genuinely polite people I have ever known or read of.

Most of the hills around this glen, for many miles eastward and westward, are covered with dense oak-forests that are tenanted by wild animals only, among which deer and wild boars are numerous. A short boar-spear is very commonly borne by the men here

as elsewhere, but they appear to do so more from ancient usage than from any present necessity, as I never heard of the boars doing injury to any one unless when they were attacked.

12*th*.—A fine young Pole, who has just deserted from the neighbouring fort, tells the people they may assuredly expect this season that the Russian army will make a descent in the bay of Semez (that is, will effect the military occupation pretended to after the seizure of the Vixen) for the purpose of establishing a fort here, and that they will afterwards retire by the Kûban, wasting the country in their way. He strongly urges the people to prepare accordingly. His prediction is so far corroborated by a large supply of planks having been landed by four vessels at Doba. The Circassians of that neighbourhood have made an attempt to burn them.

Hasesh told Luca that the Pasha of Trebizond sent him thence to Tireboli, where he found himself under a species of arrest, in which he was detained for forty-five days, and might have remained longer had he not effected his escape. But notwithstanding his having experienced this detention he has remained here so long that it is now about five months since he left Constantinople, although Sefir Bey's letter expressly enjoins that he should return in one. This is a sample of the strange ignorance of the value of time prevalent among this people. To this is to be attributed the delay of Hasesh, not by any means to any unwillingness of the people to comply with the suggestions now made to them.

17*th*.—A man of this hamlet has just returned

from the fortress of Ghelenjík, whither he had conveyed a person afflicted with cancer or some such malady, it being especially permitted that in such cases application may be made to the Russians. The conduct of the latter in receiving them is at once humane and politic.

This man reports a large assemblage of shipping both at Ghelenjík and Doba, and the landing at these places of a very large military force, which, as he learned from an Armenian interpreter, is to be increased, a portion of the shipping having sailed for Shapsekwa, to remove the army there, which has already constructed the fort. What the destination of this force is, he could not learn precisely; the interpreter said that probably the erection of a fort in the bay of Semez was intended; but that at all events he believed the country towards the Kûban was to be again devastated. Alas! it has already suffered severely from hail-storms. What term is there to be to such inflictions?

In consequence of my visit in the beginning of July last to the wrecks of the corvettes at Sashe, to ascertain the best way of getting on shore their cannons, and of my having made drawings and models for the apparatus I thought necessary for that purpose, two persons were deputed soon after to request me to go there and superintend the operations, for which a considerable body of men was then assembled. Though very busy with letters at the time, I set out lest the heat of the zeal then raised might cool; but I had only got half way, when our party was met by two or three others, who informed us that a quarrel

attended with bloodshed had taken place, and that in consequence the muster had dispersed. This is the second event of that description, I am sorry to say, which has occurred lately, and on the same account: a noble of the sept Khûnsh wished to have in marriage a daughter of Hadji-Dakhûm-okû, of the sept Barzek, to which the latter objected, that the grade of the sept of the former did not entitle him to make such a pretension. The lover consequently carried off the young lady, and his family retained possession of her some weeks, till her father succeeded in getting the aid of his fraternity and recapturing her, but not without bloodshed, some fifteen persons having been killed and wounded upon that occasion—and this shortly after the Russians had effected their landing at Ardler! A congress was talked of soon after, for the arrangement of this affair; but it appears not to have taken place, or to have effected anything; for the parties, as I have said, again came to blows when assembled to meet me about the raising of the cannons, when two or three were killed, and several were wounded. A person who took part in that affray, and who killed another in it, has just arrived here, intending to sojourn for refuge, until the whole affair is arranged. By him however I am glad to learn, that since I left that quarter, the people have succeeded in getting several large cannons on shore from the wreck of one of the corvettes, and that the opposition to the Russians is continued with spirit; a pretty severe action having occurred just before he left, in consequence of their having attempted to cut down some more wood in the neighbourhood of the fortress.

19*th.*—The pursuit of the Pole has proved a complete wild-goose chase. Ten days ago I sent off two of my people with strict orders to find him in spite of every obstacle—a slight one however served to defeat them ; when I again sent off one of them, accompanied by the brother of my host, with still stricter injunctions and directions to obtain the aid of Serasker-okû Mehmet—a relative of Indar-okû, —who is said to be an able and patriotic person, and at the head of affairs in Abazak. He readily lent his aid, and sent me moreover a message expressing his readiness to serve me in any way, and his hope to be soon enabled to wait upon me. As for the Pole he was soon found, but instead of Kraszenski, the count, he proved to be a notorious thief and liar of that name (perhaps assumed), well known as such to Stanislav, and many others who had served with him in Anapa.

20*th.*—My host here is of a friendly, honest, disposition and an active inquiring mind, not, however, by any means profound. He seems abundantly endued with what the phrenologists call adhesiveness; and thus, not content with the good terms we were on, and the professions of kindness we had made each other, he at length dunned my dragoman for several days to beg of me to strike hands personally with him (a clasping of the thumbs) in token of our future amity, which he declared he would prefer to his roomful of treasure. This, therefore, has been done, in presence of witnesses, and apparently much to his gratification. This morning, however, has afforded evidence more convincing to me of his good opinion. He began

the conversation by inquiring of me whether more than one book had been given by God to men; to which I replied that I must know him still better before speaking with him upon religion. His drift, however, which I did not see at first, soon became apparent—viz. something to steer by in the wavering of his faith: for, said he, "the Turks say that you, as a Ghiaour, must be doomed to hell; but you refused the other day to give medicine to procure abortion, because it is a great crime; and you show anxiety to buy slaves that you may set them at liberty; whereas a trifling gain would have induced a Turk to give the medicine, and he would make slaves of all of a different creed, believing that Paradise is for those of his faith only. *I fear he does not tell us the truth.*"

23*rd*.—Yesterday I attended public divine service for the first time since my arrival in this country. But alas! the object of our adoration is, so far as we know, but an imaginary one; viz. Tshiblé, the Spirit of Thunder. I say so far as we know, for who can tell but that the bolt of death is confided to some ministrant angel?

About mid-day I set out on foot attended by my host, by Indar-okû Kaspolet, all the males of our hamlet, and sundry others; and on the way down our glen we were joined by many more, some of whom bore on their heads tables covered with loaves of bread or masses of pasta. A young man preceded us to place stepping-stones for me—the only one shod— across the many windings of the stream then swollen by the heavy equinoxial rains we have had. A short walk along the side of the valley of the

Pshat brought us into an ancient portion of the neighbouring oak forest, among whose venerable trees were assembled several men proportionably as aged, besides a host of younger ones and of boys—forming together a congregation of a hundred and twenty or thirty, some of whom were seated on fallen trees, and others on branches strewn on the ground, and forming two sides of a square, at some little distance from the largest tree; beside which stood erect one cross, while against it were laid numerous disused ones, which had served the sacred purpose in their day, and are now consecrated to "decay's slow ravage."

On our entering these sacred precincts, all who were seated arose and stood till I had taken my seat on a cloak spread for me on some foliage. Several of those who arrived afterwards lifted their caps in salutation, instead of raising the right hand to the head, as is commonly done. In front of the cross were ranged, in rows, from forty to fifty small tables covered, like those I have mentioned, with loaves of bread and masses of pasta; and behind it hung from a transverse beam sundry large kettles over a blazing fire: close at hand were tied two goats—the sacrifice of the day—impatiently awaiting their fate, and numerous dogs (sure of something falling to their share) prowled around, and gave occupation to the boys in scaring them from the tables. As for the men, after conversing for some time within the place of assembly, parties of them at length retired beyond it to discuss their private affairs; while—so little of the "bump of veneration" do these children of nature possess—several occupied

the tedious interval of time in preparing saddle-straps, and my neighbour Kaspolet in arranging anew my sabre-girth. The time that elapsed may be imagined from the fact of the cauldrons having been set to boil about the time of our assembling, and the goats that were to be consigned to them not having been sacrificed till a considerable time after. This was done in the same way as on the fête of the Cross. An invocation was then made to the Spirit of Thunder by those few who had charge of the tables, and who remained uncovered throughout, interceding for general protection, and that the bolt, as well as every other evil, might be averted from them and their families. Immediately afterwards two large cakes were served to me, along with a bowl of shuat (millet-flour, honey and water fermented), and then a general distribution of these refreshments was made to all assembled, down to the very youngest boys, and the beverage continued to be circulated around from time to time until the meat was cooked. During this interval, also, the old men, after having been some time congregated together, appeared to have instructed a younger one, who in a rapid address to us, announced three approaching fête-days, and the number and kind of victims (goats or bullocks) requisite for each : as so many for the cross, so many for abundance, and so many for averting the plague.

Another long interval ensued before the contents of the kettles were ready, and at length the consummation so desired, by me at least, was attained, when the chief priest (if one may so call the busy individual in shirt and drawers among the tables) cut the meat

in such portions as afforded to every table an equal one. On that destined for Kaspolet and me there were placed half-a-dozen large loaves of excellent bread, which, except the one cut for us, our host was allowed to bring home for my use. As for the bread and pasta of the other tables, (which were all as plenteously provided,) the repast was scarce well begun, when there were applications made for them by those who had contributed the goats, and who filled several cloaks with the contributions made. Shuat was liberally served while we ate, and immediately upon our being done the whole assembly dispersed.

These solemnities occur very frequently after this period of the year; and if they serve no other purpose (which, however, I do not admit, as any religion appears to me better than none), they are at least so far beneficial in frequently bringing the people amicably together, and in refreshing with animal food those who might otherwise seldom taste it; for besides what may be eaten by all those who choose to make their appearance at the festivals, many of the poorer folks are to be seen carrying home portions of meat for their families—distribution to the poor being a part of the religious services enjoined.

LETTER XXIV.

ASCENT OF A HAUNTED MOUNTAIN—RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL—ENFORCEMENT OF DISCIPLINE—RUSSIAN OPERATIONS--MEAD OF THE CIRCASSIANS--HONESTY—FUNERAL FEAST—MILITARY MORALS OF RUSSIA—SERASKER-OKU MEHMET OF ABAZAK—FESTIVAL OF MEREM—"QUEST" OF A NEWLY-MARRIED WIFE—MEDICAL PRACTICE.

PSEOMUZ, 1*st October*, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. About the time I last wrote we learned that the Russians were busily engaged in reimbarking the army at Shapsekwa, which must have been numerous, as first sixteen and afterwards twenty-three ships of war and transports were employed. The fort in that valley is completed; but its site appears to have been badly chosen, for it has been almost entirely inundated by a freshet of the stream upon whose bank it is constructed, close to the sea.

Immediately after this embarkation the fleet, to the amount of about thirty sail, appeared in the bay of Sûgûljak (Sûjûk-kaleh), and so soon as they were brought to anchor, a heavy cannonading of the low unwooded shores was commenced, and continued for two days, in order to scare away their defenders; and then the army, which had received a large reinforcement—previously assembled at Ghelenjík—with a strong park of artillery, was quickly landed in two divisions: one at the north-east corner of the bight of the bay, on a slight eminence, where a small Turkish

trading village formerly stood (until destroyed by the Russian shipping), and the other to the westward, on a larger eminence—where the whole force has since been concentrated, and is now busily engaged in the construction of a fort, to which, from the nature of the locality, and the want of cannon among the Circassians in that quarter, it is almost impossible that any effectual opposition can be offered.

The Russians have thus finally abandoned the fort ceded to them by the Turks, and the site they have chosen for their new one is so far preferable that it commands a large portion of the very rich valley, and at the same time retains communication with the sea. This bombarding of the shores of the bay for two days before any army could venture to land must strike every one as a curious sequel to the assertion his Excellency Count Nesselrode made to his Excellency Earl Durham as to their being in the military occupation of Russia.

On the 25th I at length received a portion of the letters brought for me from Constantinople by Arif Reis more than a month since. The others are detained by the chiefs in the south (although I have already sent twice for them), who hope thus to induce me to return there and communicate my news personally, being jealous at the preference for the north we Englishmen have shown, and at the superior consideration its chiefs enjoy in having had addressed to them all communications from abroad. But the sole motive I have for wishing to remain in this quarter is that it is now the scene of action, and consequently the field in which my labour can be most beneficial. I am thus severely and undeservedly

punished; for the letters doled out in this manner are the first that have arrived for upwards of six tedious months. In fact, this obstruction in correspondence, this total ignorance in which I am kept, for such large portions of a year at a time, of the fate of my family, my friends, and of all that is passing in the rest of the world, forms the chief part of the privation that I have here to endure.

In this neighbourhood is a mountain (called Kajerekhiaps), which is not only the loftiest on the whole line of coast as far as Ghagra, and thus possesses the best view, but which is invested with the further interest of being reported to have its summit, where there is a dark pool, haunted by some supernatural being (a white horse is the only one said to have been seen), who maintains his solitude by causing the death of any one presumptuous enough to invade it. The only person I can hear of fool-hardy enough to have made the attempt was a young Turk, whose after fate I have not learned.

In the hope of contributing to disabuse the people of this idle belief, and for the sake of the view, I determined to make the ascent; and having suddenly announced my intention, on the fine frosty morning of yesterday, as I set out, staff in hand, for the exploit, I found the people here so taken a-back by what they considered my rashness, that I was left to proceed alone, and had got half way down our glen before my host and a son of Indar-okû, fearful of reproach at leaving me unescorted, overtook and insisted on accompanying me. How far this spirit of hospitality might have carried them, I know not; for, luckily I soon after met Stanislav, my Pole, and

was thus enabled to dispense with the escort of my host beyond about a quarter of the ascent, where he seemed to be well pleased to be left with a friend till our return; and he shook his head most ominously as we parted from him. The elevation cannot, I think, exceed 3000 feet, if it be so much. The view is grand from its extent, although characterised by a certain degree of sameness—forest-clad mountains and ocean, with a portion of the bay of Ghelenjík. The object I wished most to see—the peaks of Elbrûz—was hidden by haze on the horizon. We effected the ascent and descent in about two hours, and found the top of the mountain destitute of the black pool (or the white horse); but covered by a deep dark-coloured soil, which produced luxuriant herbage, and a stately grove of oaks that appeared never to have been violated by the axe, the aged having been left to decay where they fell. I endeavoured to persuade the proprietor, who has extended his cultivation about half way up the hill, to carry it further toward the summit; and perhaps in time he may take courage to do so. The tops of the neighbouring hills appeared to have soil equally fertile.

Since the middle of last month a great deal of rain has fallen, and yesterday morning a change of wind to the northward reduced the temperature 29 degrees—that is from 58°, the average of the five preceding mornings, to 29°; a degree of cold, I presume, very unusual so early in the season, and which I observed had entirely blighted many trees, not only on the mountain but elsewhere below.

A great portion was abstracted "solido de die" from my having gone this forenoon to attend another of

those religious fêtes about which my curiosity was excited, both on account of its singular character and of the concourse of people of both sexes who are generally present. It may be called "the Feast of Presentation," and one fond of tracing descents might assign to it a Jewish one, and hold it but a commemoration of the sacrifice of Abraham; for the usage here is that every boy after a certain age be "presented to God" at this fête, and that an animal be sacrificed for him; and such consideration has this usage attained, that even those who profess themselves Mussulmans, and hold all these observances somewhat in aversion, as "not ordained by their book," are constrained, either by the force of habit or the influence of the opinion of the majority, to comply with it. Thus my present kind host, Zekwahaz-okû, one of this class, to-day presented his son. The place of meeting was again in the valley of the Pshat, on a green, where a grove of venerable oaks forms one of nature's own solemn sanctuaries for worship. In the midst of it stands a cross (decayed ones reclining behind), and before it were again ranged the tables, covered with loaves of bread, or masses of pasta, as they were brought by different parties from the hamlets around; and I observed that many (not all) of those who carried them after handing them to the priest, took off their caps, kneeled before the cross, and bowed their foreheads to the ground.

At a short distance on one side of these sacred precincts, a rural couch was spread for me, and on the other the females, who began to arrive soon after me, and might amount in all to about sixty, old and

young, ranged themselves—the matrons on the green round a fire, and the girls on the verge of a thicket adjoining. The ceremonial, which was more solemn than on the other occasion, commenced as formerly with a short petition to the "Great God" (Ta skho), for the conferring of every blessing, and the averting of every evil. The chief priest in pronouncing it held forward towards the cross in his right-hand a wooden goblet (of the same form as those used in our church service) filled with shuat, and in his left a large cake of *unleavened* bread, which he then handed to his attendants, and received from them five or six times successively other goblets and cakes, over which the same benediction was said, and repeated aloud by all the congregation, who had placed themselves in ranks behind the priest on their knees, and with their caps off, bowing their foreheads to the ground at the termination of each benediction, as did the matrons also. The shuat and cakes were then distributed to all of us. The victims; viz. a calf, a sheep, and two goats, were next brought in front of the cross, each held by a couple of men, while the priest pronounced a benediction over each, poured upon its forehead some shuat from one of the goblets, and singed some of its hair there with one of the waxen-tapers which burned at the foot of the tree behind the cross. They were then led away to be slaughtered, which was the signal for the congregation dispersing rather tumultuously—at least the younger portion of it—some of whom went to aid in the cutting up and preparing of the meat, in a row of large kettles; and others to amuse themselves till it was ready, by racing, leaping, &c.; while the seniors spent

the interval in conversational parties. As for the chief priest—who performed his duties with considerable dignity—he remained, during all the time, erect in front of the cross and tables, his head uncovered, a mantle over his shoulders, and a staff in his hand, directing his assistants in their duties, not the least important part of which appeared to be an equal distribution of the meat among the numerous tables, of which there were about sixty. Over each of them a benediction was pronounced by the priest before they were served to us on the green around—to the females as well as males—along with abundance of shuat. Our repast as formerly was scarcely well begun, when those who had contributed the animal portion of it, made a circuit to petition for the abundant surplus of our bread and pasta, and it was no sooner ended than the assembly dispersed. The number present on this occasion might be from four to five hundred. Last year I am told there were five times as many, and that dancing, horse-racing, mark-firing, &c., formed the amusements. The deficiency in attendance this year is attributed to the increasing distress and anxiety caused by the progress of the Russians, who, by the by, were not forgotten in the prayers, it having been petitioned that they might "be struck with blindness."

I see I have omitted to mention as a further proof of the compliance of the Mussulmans with the religious observances of the majority here, that on the afternoon of the day preceding the fête, I wished, after my excursion to the haunted mountain, to have a draught of shuat, which my host makes better than most folks, and has taught me to like in the absence

of anything better; but I found that the large broust just made, as well as a quantity of unleavened bread, had been prepared for the fête of the following day, and were laid out in form in the *pete* or kitchen-house, there to remain till the evening, when a qualified senior should come, and in presence of the males and females of the hamlet, say a benediction over them. Learning this, I begged that the arrangements might not be infringed, and ordered water for my present thirst: my prompt host however had already sent for a senior, who soon made his appearance; but I was begged not to make mine at the ceremony; because the married females in that case would absent themselves. The whole however, I understand, consisted in a prayer for the general good of the household, or rather households of the hamlet, pronounced over the bread and shuat, after which some of both was served to me.

Shuat—the national drink of Circassia—is generally served in immense wooden bowls with one handle (cut out of one piece of wood); and these "flowing cups" seldom circulate around a party of lusty warriors without reminding me of the bousing of our ancestors, whose mead or metheglin probably resembled shuat, except that in the latter a portion of millet-flour is added to the honey and water—to the improvement, perhaps, of the fermentation.

Among the objects to which—as *quasi* governors of the country—my countrymen and I endeavoured last winter to direct the special attention of the chiefs of the north, were the suppression of trade with Russia on the Kûban, eastward in Shapsuk for salt, and the punishment of a faction of thieves that had

arisen at Adughûm, in which a noble of the sept Tshûpako was said to be implicated. I am happy to learn that, during my stay in the south, both these important affairs have been dealt with: the thieves have been punished by the burning of their houses, confiscation of their effects, &c.; and the trading suppressed, excepting as I hear to a small extent in the neighbourhood of the Ubin. Its entire suppression thereabouts will be of difficult accomplishment till a new state of affairs arises, on account of the example so long presented to the people by their neighbours in Psadûg.

8*th*.—Irksome, and indeed painful, as this life of separation, privation, and solitude (the solitude of the mind) has become, and wasting as I find to be the various anxieties that necessarily accompany it, I have at present before me the prospect of five or six months —winter months—of even worse endurance under these portentous circumstances.

The Russian general at Semez, following the plan adopted of late in the south, not to trust entirely to the slow process of military occupation, but to endeavour through the terror of military preparation and through menace to induce the people to make terms, has let it be understood, that so soon as the fort in hand is finished, another is to be undertaken at the eastern extremity of the valley of Anapa, and that he purposes remaining with his army in that quarter throughout the winter, and devastating the country, "unless the people wish it otherwise;" that is, unless they consent to make terms with (submit to) him, in which case he promises immediately to withdraw his forces. Now it unfortunately happens

that the harvest of this year, although exceedingly abundant, is almost unprecedentedly late, owing to the great rains we have had recently, and a considerable portion of it has been destroyed by tremendous showers of hail, which have killed many of the smaller animals. The chief wealth also of the people in the more level and open portions of Notwhatsh and Shapsuk, now threatened, consists in numerous flocks and herds, provision for which, (as well as their own,) is easily discoverable amid the forests during winter, and may thus easily be destroyed. This, however, though severe enough, would be the extent of the calamity, if the Russians alone were to be employed; for although their infantry with its artillery be irresistible in such portions of the country, yet its motions are of necessity so slow and unwieldy, that the people could without much difficulty save their families and effects. As for Russian cavalry, I have already shown that against Circassian it is quite inoperative. But the case will be entirely altered if the operations of cavalry similar to the Circassian are combined with those of the Russian infantry; and this it is now reported is to be done, and that the Russians are making in the provinces of the plains to the eastward, a forced and large levy of Circassian cavalry, whose operations are to be combined with those of the army now at Semez, in devastating the open country during the winter. Such a prospect in addition to all they have suffered for so many years, has filled the people of those parts with dismay, and I consider it most fortunate that their expectations were so timeously excited by the re-

ceipt of the document and letters from Sefir Bey, otherwise I should have feared much for the result; for even as matters now stand I am not without apprehension and anxiety.

No one dares speak of surrendering; but some of the people (and even one of the chiefs whom I have hitherto considered as among the stanchest) have counselled entering into the treaty proposed by the Russian general, in the hope, as they say, of deceiving him after he has withdrawn his army! But others of the chiefs and elders (particularly Az-Demir, upon whom hitherto I did not count) have shown wisdom and energy proportioned to the crisis, and stoutly resist all approximation to accommodation. I believe the majority, as yet, is on their side; but they appear diffident of succeeding alone in supporting the spirit of the people when the pressure of distress comes to be felt, and they have sent repeatedly to entreat of me to remain and assist in their endeavours. The last message I received to this effect was brought to me by Hasesh the deputy, who is about to return to Constantinople, with the answer of the country to the document brought by him. He spent the afternoon of the 5th, and morning of the 6th, in urgent and varied representations to me of the extreme necessity there is for my sacrificing my own wishes and interests yet a few months more, for the salvation of the country. I found him not only an extremely eloquent and energetic but a very judicious person, and as he has had occasion of late to see most of the leading persons throughout the greater portion of the north, he may be supposed to be well acquainted with the present general condition of the minds of the people.

According to him then, if I remain there is every probability that the best disposed (that is the firmest) chiefs may with my aid succeed in preventing any accommodation; whereas if I depart, there is every reason to fear that the spirits of all may sink, and the contest be at an end before any solution of the hopes of the country, as connected with the correspondence now in progress, can be come at. Now I well know the distrust many of the people have come to entertain of all correspondence; any fruit from which they have never yet seen. I well know also, that the portion of the country now in jeopardy has always taken the lead during these last ten years of war; that its example has been looked up to by, and its succumbing at present would be fatal sooner or later to, all the rest. I told Hasesh, therefore, that I had resolved on remaining, provided goods could be found me, on loan, to repay the expenses I must necessarily be at, for that I could not consent to live here dependent upon the generosity of people who have little to spare. I have sent for the second time to a merchant in the north upon this business, in which Hasesh has promised, if detained, to aid me.

His recommendation in this respect was somewhat amusing; viz. that I should turn Circassian, in going to live at the houses where I could best be entertained, and demanding of any one who had a coat or anything better than mine to make an exchange, "which is here no shame."

I have accepted the offer of Hadji Ismael, who has been latterly in my service, and upon whom I think I can depend, to go to Constantinople with letters and

bring thence my English letters—waiting for the return of answers to those I now send, when he is to offer the captain who will first come for me an extra freight. But I know the aversion entertained by Turkish captains against putting to sea during winter, and I have but little expectation of seeing my messenger again before the month of March. Such is the prospect at present before me, and I think he must have a stout heart who could look upon it with composure.

The last letter I have received from you gives me hopes from England, but they are fainter than those of the preceding. Two other circumstances however tend to make me believe that a storm is brewing elsewhere, which may relieve this overcharged atmosphere. First, the entirely altered tone in which the Russian general addresses the Circassians: the summer before last, Williamineff, in the blasphemous letter of which I sent you a copy, coupled his demand for unconditional surrender with a threat of utter extermination or vengeance if it was refused; whereas during this campaign every new undertaking has been preluded by courteous and urgent solicitations for terms of peace—the advantages of which the generals have been careful to point out. Secondly, a conversation which Tausch (Marigny's friend) held with a respectable inhabitant of Jûbghe, who visited head-quarters lately on the exchange of prisoners; in which conversation the former, after abundant abuse of us English, and assurances of the improbability of war arising between Russia and Turkey, was incautious enough to abuse the Sultan also, who he said he feared would be

found a "deceitful devil," who flattered them with professions of peace while he busily prepared for war.

I could not let pass the remarks of Hasesh upon, and apparent anxiety about, the saving of time, without some animadversions upon the unaccountable expenditure of it which has already occurred in his mission; for he left Constantinople in the beginning of April, and his orders were to return within a month. To this he replied that he was in no degree to be blamed for it, and as little had it been caused through any difficulty or backwardness in regard to the answer of the country he now carried with him; that forty-five days had been lost through the misconduct of the Pasha of Trebizond, as already mentioned, and the whole of the remainder, which was not spent in obtaining signatures to the answer, was consumed in the purchase of the serfs he takes with him for Sefir Bey; that he was frequently urged to depart without these, but day after day received orders from the Tamatas (seniors) to stay. This ignorance of the value of time—and under such circumstances—is truly deplorable.

A report is current of the Tshetshenses having resumed the war in a very desperate manner—boys, women, and girls aiding in it.

13*th*.—My host returned to-day from a mission to the Russian head-quarters at Semez, about an exchange of prisoners, and the news he brings me are not a little perplexing.

The Russians, according to present indications, seem to have in hand three forts in the district of Semez, one on the site of Sûjûk-kaleh; one large one on the N.W. corner of the bay, and a small

one further up the valley, close by our former residence. It would thus appear to be the object of the general to drive the inhabitants not only from that rich valley, but from the hills between it, the valley of Anapa and the sea; and to establish a line of communication between the bay of Semez and Anapa by means of the fort projected in the eastern end of the valley of the latter. Fortunately there is a difficult defile between the two valleys, which will render this project not easily practicable.

The Russians, roused possibly by some movement or symptom of movement towards the west, are at length showing a just appreciation of the possessions they have been permitted to acquire in this country; in which from present appearances they will soon have so seated themselves as to make their displacement a work of great labour, if not impracticable. Yet I cannot but wonder that those statesmen and warriors who have so deplored—as fatal to Constantinople—the error of having permitted Russia to acquire and strengthen herself in Sevastopol, have not adverted to the best means left of retrieving that error; viz. the rescuing from her grasp, and forming an antagonist station in the bays of Sûgûljak and Ghelenjík, the latter of which, though inferior to Sevastopol in extent, has yet sufficient accommodation for a large force; admirable shelter as a roadstead; abundance of ship materials close at hand; and natural advantages which at small cost of means and science would make it less assailable than Sevastopol can ever well become, if not utterly impregnable, especially the hands of a power in amity with the natives.

The other news brought by my host was, that the general has or pretends he has received a document respecting this country, with the signatures of the Sultan and Emperor, for the inspection of which he has invited the Circassians to send deputies. He boasted moreover of the mishap that had befallen my letters entrusted to Arif Reis, and that their contents were known to him.

I have scarce a doubt that the document in question is some renewed attempt at imposition in regard to the possession of this country, and I am therefore in no little anxiety for the return of my dragoman from Khissa, (whither I sent him and another for the remainder of my English letters detained by the chiefs of the south,) in order that I may proceed nearer to the scene of action, and do my best to prevent the evil consequences of knavery and credulity.

I have been for several days past without any attendants of my own here, having, besides the missions to the south for letters, and to the north for intimating my stay, &c., sent my faithful Pole along with the Hadji Ismael to Constantinople. But house-service seems so natural to all the natives, that one can seldom be much at a loss, and the people of the hamlet I am now at, females as well as males, are all so attentive and kind that although I can now express my common wants in Circassian, they leave me but few to speak of. The unremitting, watchful attention I have received here since the 22nd August is the more remarkable, that until within these two days it appeared very doubtful if I should have means to

make compensation. Now, however, that doubt is happily removed, the chiefs to the north having effected for me the loan I required for my expenses during the winter, and got me the offer of whatever more I may possibly require, which I take to be good proof of the necessity they find for my remaining. Part of the loan, a bale of goods, has been sent me here, and is beside me in my cot where I sleep alone, and generally with the door open all night; such security do I conceive there to be amongst these people for me and my effects, notwithstanding the high price that is set on my head by the Russians and the present poverty. I have even been without arms here for several days, having lent or given all I had but a broken pistol. So much for this robber-country!

27th.—Since about the middle of September we have had a constant succession of variable weather, the greater proportion of which has been rainy, and occasionally in such torrents as mountain countries near the sea only know. On the 20th this weather was accompanied by a gale from the S.S.W., in consequence of which a large Russian vessel was wrecked, and all hands lost, near Pshat. She was laden with spirits and wine for the garrison, but these have fallen in fatal abundance into the hands of the Circassians of the neighbourhood: and many seem to have acquired a taste for the former deleterious article, although I have never but once seen intoxication produced by its use.

Besides the rain we have had hail since the 23rd, a considerable fall of snow, and frost for the four last

mornings; the thermometer having been this morning down to 25°, which I understand is very unusual at this time of the year: with the frost, however, fine weather has again set in.

We have had here a great funeral-feast in memory of a brother of one of the proprietors of this hamlet. For three days and nights previously our hamlet was thronged by females who came to assist in the preparations, baking of bread and pastry, and brewing of shuat, and many also on the day of the feast brought contributions, in bread, pastry, honey, shuat, sheep, &c.

On the appointed day the number of persons assembled must have considerably exceeded a hundred, for I counted about forty females, old and young, who went down in procession to a neighbouring field (while others remained in the hamlet) to attend along with the men (who were much more numerous) a prayer pronounced by a mollah over the grave of the deceased. According to the general usage of this part of the country his rifle and pistol should have been fired and his sword drawn over his grave, his horse paraded three times round it, and one of its ears then cut off in memory of him. But as his brother professes to be of the Mussulman creed, these rites, after some little debate about them, were omitted. The feast as usual was held in the open air (though the day was cold) in the field spoken of, in the higher corner of which the females ranged themselves with the matrons in the front, and the eatables were collected—piles of loaves, and six or eight large cauldrons of meat. The men were at some distance

below. On this occasion thirteen sheep and a cow were killed, as meat and other provisions have to be supplied not only for the eating on the spot but for distribution among the poorer persons, to be carried home. I did not attend, but could see all that passed from my cot, whither an excellent saddle of mutton, pastry, honeycomb, &c. were sent me.

Very soon after the repast the assembly broke up, as many had come from a distance; and witnessing it more particularly than I have hitherto had an opportunity of doing, I could not but admire the graceful manner in which the females bade each other adieu—first a gentle accolade with their right arms, and then a grasp of their right hands. The night before so many had slept here, that the houses —even that appropriated for cooking—had to be allotted, so many for males and so many for females.

My envoys to Khissa (the third party I have sent for the letters I expected in the packet detained there) have to-day returned, but the packet which has created so much expectation, not only in me, but in most folks along the whole coast, contains only a newspaper! That paper, however, has afforded me no little compensation for my anxiety and expense, as it contains a full account of the banquet given to Mr. Urquhart at Glasgow last May, and of his impressive and eloquent speech on that occasion, which event is by far the best proof I have had of an improvement, an immense progression of interest in the affairs of the East; and evidence, which is not less gratifying, of an awakened sense of the degradation

England has so long suffered from the mismanagement and neglect of her interests abroad. But my fear now is that before this interest attain the maturity of action, this, the most advantageous field in which it could at present be exerted for the salvation of both Turkey and Persia, and the safeguard of our Indian frontier—to say nothing of preventing the submission of this gallant people—may be closed on it for ever. For, in addition to the critical position in which this important portion of the country is at present placed, by the duration of its previous suffering, and the great preparation now being made finally to crush its spirit of resistance, I have learned that the Russians are now encamped in three separate localities among the Azras around Sûkûm-kaleh to *force* them to give recruits for further operations, as it is supposed, against this coast—that Sass with his army is encamped on the Laba; and that other detachments are expected to enter Shapsuk, in order to co-operate with the forces from Semez and Anapa in devastating the country during the threatened winter-campaign. That a time will come when the loss of such a position in advance as this will be bitterly and unavailingly regretted in England, cannot for a moment be doubted by any one who has bestowed the least consideration on the subject.

Russia civilise the East—what a dream! what a deception! What evidence of this has she herself shown among the mass of her native population? what improvement in their condition has she effected ever since the era of Peter? Are they at this moment in

any degree more moral, enlightened, happy, or free, than they ever were; and do her nobility or gentry (of the latter she can scarcely be said to have any) show the rest in any one essential respect, even an edifying example? If one of these questions can be answered favourably for her—as I know they cannot—we may then believe in this prophecy as to her mission of civilisation; and while such is the stationary condition of her native population in all that *deserves* the name of civilisation, the condition of her Mussulman subjects is uncontrovertibly retrograde, of which every one must see, as I saw, proof in their dilapidating towns and villages in the Crimea.

The trade of Georgia has been ruined since she was treacherously annexed to the empire; and, what is infinitely worse, the virtue of the female part of her population has been destroyed by the hosts of Russian military. Nor can the moral administration here be good, Georgia having been appointed as a place of exile for military and civil delinquents; and I believe it, moreover, to be the case, that even in Russia a willing adultress cannot be legally punished by her husband, at least where a military person is concerned. This infamy the Russian military already practise here also, wherever they have gained the ascendency, of which I have just heard an instance from a person of this neighbourhood, who said he met lately (on a mission to the Russian headquarters) a native of the plains of Kabarda, now an officer in the Russian service, who expressed, in strong terms, his increased hatred of the usurpers of his country, as destitute both of the fear of God and

of all shame, his general having openly appropriated to himself his wife, and he was unable to obtain any redress!

I have learned also within these few days, that I was not unjust in surmising that General Sass might himself have been the instigator to the murder of Jambolet Bey, of Hatukwoï; for I am told that he has openly avowed and boasted of it to Seraskerokû Mehmet, of Abazak, a person whom he erroneously believed friendly to the interests of Russia.

This chief has been described to me both by Hasesh, by my present host and by others, as a person of more extraordinary mental capacity than perhaps any other in the country. He is short, lame (presumptions in favour of talent), and somewhat deaf; but said to be all soul, and to combine qualities which we are in the habit of looking upon as irreconcilable; viz., political profundity together with the strictest veracity, and a scrupulous observance of his religion. To his exertion of the former is attributed here the comparative exemption from invasion his province has hitherto enjoyed. He was one of those who accepted the invitation to meet the Emperor, on his return from Georgia, while at the same time it is said that no one desires more ardently than he the independence of his country; and that he is compelled through the fickleness and want of concert among his countrymen of Abazak, over whom his power and influence are the greatest, to wear a semblance of friendship towards the Russians, to preserve the province in the meanwhile.

Yet all his policy failed upon the avowal by Sass

of his having caused the murder in question, as Jambolet and Mehmet had been intimate and strongly attached friends. He broke forth, therefore, in generous and warm reproach at the perfidy of the general, who, on his part, threatened him with a like fate! Mehmet replied that the general had it then in his power to put his threat in execution, but that he would find his death not unavenged by his countrymen. He was permitted to depart; but to this interview is attributed the attack made by Sass upon the province, of which I have formerly spoken. Such is the *civilisation* here disseminated by Russia!

6th November.—Indisposition detaining me here, in the mean while I have had an opportunity of learning something more of the state of religion in this part of the country. This is the fourth and last day of the fête of *Merem.* On the evening of the 2nd, shuat and cakes of unleavened bread having been prepared in honour of her, were laid out in our *pete* or kitchen-house, and having there had a blessing pronounced on them by a senior, a portion of each was distributed among us, and in due time I retired to rest, thinking no more on the subject. About midnight, however, I was awakened by stentorian music, and having thrown open the shutters of my *skhanawûpsh* or window, I found the green of our hamlet thronged by about a hundred men and boys, some of whom entered the *pete* to make free with the cakes and shuat, while the younger ones sported in the moonlight on the green, and those who had the *entrée* visited the cots of the females, who were all dressed and astir, not being ignorant, like me, of what was to be expected.

In somewhat less than an hour the choristers and their companions departed, and the former were to be heard long afterwards arousing the other hamlets of our little glen (to my surprise I learn they are forty-five in number) with the hymn of *Merem*, of which Luca, who amused himself by mingling in the crowd, caught unfortunately only a few paragraphs; such as, "Thy long-flowing robes are resplendent with silver; thou art the mistress of heaven and the chief of the damsels. Oh send us plenteous harvests, peace and happiness!"

Thus are passed four nights of this moon, while as many days are devoted to sacrifices, feasting and distribution to the poor (that is *poorer*, for none here is left positively destitute) at the hamlets of those who can best afford it. On the second day, Luca went to one of these sacrificial feasts in a neighbouring glen, upon which occasion the host gave to each of the guests assembled in a large cot, a small piece of the liver of a cow he had killed, telling each—in varied phrase—of the blessing *Merem* would confer upon him and his. We had here next day a smaller and less perfect celebration of these rites, as my host professes Islamism; but the only thing remarkable it afforded me were *five* substantial meals in compensation for the two meagre ones I had had on the two previous days, forming thus a tolerable average, which is quite in accordance with Circassian usage; meagre diet being the rule, and substantial the exception; while regularity in time is as little observed as in quantity or quality.

Yesterday a small procession of females visited the

two principal families of our hamlet, in attendance upon a pretty young, newly-married wife, who, according to a custom common, though not universal, and considered anything but degrading, was making the tour of her friends to demand presents. Here she had a friendly reception, contibutions from those she applied to, and an escort of two of our young ladies as far as the next hamlet in her round.

Speaking of pretty wives, I must tell you that we have here at present, for my medical advice, the very young wife of Indar-okû Kaspolet, of whose fame I had long heard, as the belle of the whole coast. Some of her features are fine, others merely pretty; her height is good, and her form unexceptionable; but her eye-brows are too arched, and the *tout-ensemble* of her expression somewhat childish and soulless.

I have seen her however to great disadvantage, as she has been for many months afflicted with violent hysterical affections, and other female complaints. I thought upon my first visit to her that I should not have had an opportunity of judging for myself; for upon my entrance, I found her erect behind the door, and the upper two-thirds of her person totally enveloped in a snowy muslin veil. Thus stood she for a long time motionless and voiceless, so that, if her case had been more desperate, and my belief in such things greater, I might have imagined I had come only in time to see her passing spirit. At length the urgency of one of the young ladies present, aided by my declaration that I too should stand unless she were seated, induced her to do so, disclosing to me at the same time, only the soft and lovely

radiance of her large hazel eyes. Next came her Phidian nose, and then each star in the galaxy of her beauties dawned upon me in succession. Poor creature! these incidents, and the reserve of her person I have otherwise observed, make me think that, like some damsels at home, who are cursed by the consciousness of beauty, her ailments may have been caused or increased by seclusion, and restraint even from the little exercise taken here by females of her station. After a few days' trial of the medicines, she declared to some of her friends her distrust of them, and her fear that their extreme bitterness would kill her hope of progeny. So my quinine, &c., and I have had our *congé;* and a conclave having been held, it is decided that her fits are occasioned by the devil, or a returned spirit, and her husband has been in search of a wise woman to conjure out the evil one. But even in this respect opinions are not unanimous; for a sage of this glen declares that the noble lady's only hope of cure lies in a sacrifice, and prayers to Tshiblé.

LETTER XXV.

FUNERAL OBSEQUIES OF A SERF—REVIVAL OF THE MILITARY SPIRIT OF SHAPSUK—DIVERSIONS IN FAVOUR OF CIRCASSIA—CIRCASSIAN MANNERS—TURKISH NOTIONS OF FREE-TRADE—EXCURSION TO THE NORTH—WARLIKE OPERATIONS—PAINFUL INTELLIGENCE FROM ENGLAND—AN ORTHODOX MUSSULMAN—FEMALE ATTENTIONS TO THE WOUNDED—RETREAT OF THE RUSSIANS—REVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN.

PSEOMUZ, 8*th November*, 1838.

MY DEAR ——. Another funeral-feast in this glen has furnished me with some further particulars regarding what may be called the ancient national religion of this country. The celebration was in honour of a deceased *serf;* nine sheep and an ox were sacrificed; and Luca who was present observed, that on killing each, the person who did so pronouncing the serf's name, added "Don't fear; this will carry you to heaven!" Such honours are paid to the manes even of foreign serfs—Poles and Russians. I shared in the feast, although it was half a mile distant; two men having been sent here with a fine saddle of mutton, pastry, &c.

14*th.*—Serasker-okû, the famed politician of Abazak, has been again taken at unawares; so that I am forced to doubt his right to the character given him. Two persons in the garb and character of very poor dervishes, arrived at his hamlet some little time ago

from the Russian territories, and contrived to make him believe by the sanctity of their conversation and habits, that they were devotees on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the prophet, who preferred making their way thither through the territories of the "Faithful," rather than those of the Ghiaour. They prayed together, and conversed together, on the condition and prospects of the country, until at length the devotees affected to have discovered, in the state of the blockade on the coast, danger to them, of which they had not before been aware. They therefore begged Mehmet to escort them back towards the Russian frontier, which as a hospitable host he did; and it is now ascertained that shortly after he left them, their squalid dervish habiliments were exchanged for a handsome Russian costume, so that no doubt is now entertained of their having been spies in disguise. They spoke Turkish fluently; and Mehmet now owns that he was too communicative to them. Perhaps he is a deeper politician than I thought—and a traitor to boot!

The level and defenceless nature of the country at the embouchure of the Shapsekwa made any considerable opposition to the operations of the Russians in constructing a fort there nearly impracticable. Yet the complete immunity from attack they have latterly enjoyed made me fear there might be traitors among the people of that valley. Possibly the Russians of the garrison thought so too. If so, they have now received a lesson which has undeceived us both; for, imagining their good neighbours might not object to share with them the herbage of the valley for their

cattle, they made a few days since, for this purpose, a small excursion beyond the range of their guns, when a body of Circassian horsemen rushed upon them from a wood, and sabred all who were not active enough to escape back to their own precincts.

The people of Shapsuk too have just afforded some proof of a better spirit than my countrymen and I supposed to prevail among them, from all we heard during our sojourn in that province last winter. In the first place, those to the eastward, whom we left (under circumstances then mentioned) with the national oath unadministered, have of their own accord set in operation means, by a congress, &c. for the enforcement throughout the remainder of their province of that salutary measure.

They have further gallantly repelled an incursion the Russians made in considerable force into that neighbourhood, four days since, for the purpose of burning some hamlets, which they not only did not accomplish but were chased in disorder to the Kûban, and would have been pursued across the river had it not suddenly become unfordable by a freshet. This success has not however been cheaply bought, as our old friend Ghuzel Beg, the very soul of war in these parts, received seven wounds, one of which it is thought will relieve the Russians of the dread of his sword-arm for the future; others in his breast from bullets are but severe bruises, his strong shirt of mail having prevented worse consequences. His two sons were severely wounded in the same affair. The third favourable proof given by these people occurred on the Abûn, from the level country, on the banks of

which the inhabitants had removed their hamlets, flocks, and herds, in order to escape the ravages inflicted by the strong detachments of troops which escorted stores from time to time to the forts of Abûn and Nicolaëfski. The last detachment however consisted of only about a regiment, with a piece of artillery; and so soon as the smallness of this force was discovered, the people of the neighbourhood assembled to the number of about five hundred, and attacked and repulsed the Russians when they attempted to return from Nicolaëfski. Determined to have another trial of strength, they sent for provisions and bivouacked on the hills in the neighbourhood of the fort for three days, during which, or rather on the intervening nights—for the fighting continued more or less each day—they contrived to draw a deep fosse right across the only route by which the Russians could return with their piece of artillery, as the hills there reduce the valley to a small breadth. The latter at length resolved to force their way from the fort, and had approached the fosse to within a very short distance, when their opponents rose in it, and poured upon them an alternating and most destructive fire. The Russians however continued their attempt for the remainder of the day, but without effect, and with the loss of their commandant, and about a third of their number killed and many more of course wounded. As for the Circassians their loss was exceedingly small, and would have been less but for the impatience of some of the younger men who, when their ammunition got done, could not be prevented from making a sally from the

fosse—where they had served for five hours—to use their sabres in driving the Russians back. They kept their ground till night, when the entire expenditure of their ammunition compelled them to retire.

Nor are these the only proofs of enterprise now given by the Shapsukians, for they have sent to advise the chiefs of this province not on any account to admit of peace being mentioned, but to continue the war, in which they will aid and moreover contribute their share to indemnify those who may suffer by it. The spirited individual who conducted the attack on the troops at Nicolaëfski passed through this neighbourhood the other day, with a body of his provincials, proclaiming a crusade against the cattle of the garrison of Ghelenjík. Recruits flocked in numbers to join in the foray, but an opportunity of executing it was not afforded. It is to be attempted again in a few days hence.

A person who has come here from Psadûg gives it as his opinion that there is no fear of the levies which the Russians have been forcing from the provinces in their power to the eastward being brought against this part of the country, as the Russians have their hands full with the hot war raised by the Tshetshenses, Lesghis, and Kûmûks, from which many, especially the Kabardans of the plains, who are most in the power of the Russians, have already returned wounded. This warfare has created infinite irritation among those who have been thus forced to participate in it, who loudly proclaim their wish that something would occur from abroad to enable them to turn their arms against their real enemies.

16*th*.—So many false alarms have been given as to the arrival of the Russian cavalry force, to aid in devastating the country, that it has become for me the cry of "the wolf." It is now said that they actually came to the mouth of the Kûban, when it was determined that the season was too far advanced, (for a winter's campaign!) and they were consequently withdrawn. Their number is said to have been upwards of a thousand. It is added, by two sub-officers who have deserted from the army at Semez, that that force will be speedily withdrawn. Possibly our friends the Tshetshenses have caused this timeous diversion.

Between Kertsiz my host here, and Hazmatso his brother, there is at present a dispute in which my assistance has been desired by both parties, and which I may mention as illustrative of manners. The latter was first in hand with me, having with a bashfulness rare among us at his age (thirty) expressed his great wish to be married, and his hope that I would aid him; to both of which propositions, thus generally couched, I returned favourable answers, telling him that youth was the right season for marriage, and that the superior happiness he would find in that state would compensate him for the reproach he apprehended at entering upon it *too early*, and thus abandoning the duties expected from young unmarried men. Kertsiz, who is upwards of forty, made his approaches more warily, and thus, as often happens, contributed to defeat his own object. He began by a eulogy upon his brother, and then a still higher and exceedingly diffuse one on himself—to be

inferred at least from the instances placed in array before me of respect and deference shown him by persons of worth, age, and rank on sundry occasions. The application of all which made by him was that it was much to be desired that I would counsel his brother to listen somewhat more to his advice, while he alluded slightly to the wish of his brother to get married, and the difficulty there was, under their present circumstances, of carrying that wish into execution. To my apprehension of these premises—to which I may add that Hazmatso had talked of carrying off his fair one and bringing her home, when his brother could not but for shame sake let her remain, and must do his best subsequently to arrange about the payment for her—it seemed to me to be but a common case of inconsideration of means in the junior, and of more consideration of them than anything else in the senior; and that if this difficulty were got over there remained none other. With the "best intentions," therefore, I mentioned to the party most deeply interested, the only mode, besides a small present, in which I could contribute towards his establishment; viz. by sending my dragoman with him in the round he proposed making among his friends for presents, to second his applications as from one who, with his brother, had shown me great hospitality and kindness. This proposition seemed to please the *youth* entirely; but from Kertsiz it met a different reception; for it then transpired that his aim was to prevent his brother from marrying a certain pretty girl he had set his affections on, in order that he might implement a contract with another girl of less

personal charms, but of wealthier and more influential family and connexion, to whom he (Kertsiz) had, without consulting the other, some years since affianced him, (such power devolving on the eldest brother after the father's death,) and he was eloquent upon the folly of his brother in preferring considerations so trifling as those of beauty, &c., to honour and a troop of friends, of wealth and influence. And then this having opened a path for digression, in which he is perfect, he expatiated on his preference of honour and friendship far beyond gold, "even this room full of it," said he; "because it may become spent, whereas friendship is inexhaustible, and a succour for one whensoever his other resources have failed, who may then apply to his friends to replenish him."

Here are a beauty and a purpose in friendship to which even Cicero did not advert! Nothing, however, is here more common than such application of it; and in this way, that is by what we would call a begging-circuit, are losses of all sorts redeemed, and means raised for marriages, payments of fines, and such other casualties in Circassian life. And the usage, though in some degree hostile to industry and husbandry, is not without beneficial influences—in inducing a man to see that his character stand well in the community, and to exert hospitality to those who visit him, in order that he may not be niggardly dealt by in the day of his need. It has the further good effect of preventing any one being reduced, as is so common among us, to degradation and despair, through misfortune or even imprudence; and such a sight, the reproach of *civilisation*, as persons per-

ishing, or even in danger of perishing, for want of the necessaries of life, is nowhere to be found. I have often it is true met with individuals, particularly Anapalis, who I was told had lost everything; but their indigence was not discoverable in their personal appearance, and still less in their reception and treatment.

Not only does the authority of the father, as instanced above, devolve on the oldest son, but the deference and respect also which were shown the former are continued to the latter, in whose presence his brothers seldom or ever eat or seat themselves. As for the dispute, I have declined interfering in it, and told Kertsiz he must find coadjutors among his countrymen, as our ideas of propriety are at variance with their usage. But the younger brother, finding those ideas so consonant with his own, has expressed to me his determination to leave home for the present, and sojourn with me while I remain in the country.

A report having become prevalent of four vessels, by three of which I had sent letters of importance, having been seized and confiscated, and their crews and passengers imprisoned on the Turkish coast, between Samsûn and Trebizond, in which district the hostile influence of the Pasha of the latter town prevails—I sent Luca, a few days since, to Psid, to learn the truth from the crew and passengers of a vessel arrived there, who state that the intelligence I had received is true as far as it went; but that an order arrived subsequently from the Porte for the discharge of the individuals and restitution of the vessels, *as the Sultan had no power to prevent* merchants

trading where they pleased. The commentary is probably an adjunct by the reporters, but, at all events, it serves to show the ideas upon commercial privilege prevalent in Turkey. The Russian and Polish prisoners and deserters on board these vessels, who had been bought here by merchants, were, however, upon demand of the Russian consul, delivered up to him by the Turkish authorities, which nefarious influence shows how little real independence is now left to the *quasi* sovereign of Turkey. I have yet to learn what may have been the fate of my letters.

16*th*.—Word having been received that the Russians would march from the new fort at Semez yesterday, and I having in consequence expressed my intention to leave this place and proceed to that neighbourhood, a long debate has been held upon the point for these two last days, through the medium of Yesan-okû Mehmet Ali (from Shapsuk), a man of great talent in the estimation of my host, who has devolved upon him the duty of debating with me upon this important matter. In the course of this debate he mentioned the great advantages of my presence in the north, and that ill-tongued persons might speak against me as unwilling to fulfil my engagement in going there, and against my host as detaining me in the hopes of gain. These considerations, thus authenticated, would have been sufficient to have decided me, had I had none other. I therefore sent word last evening to the stranger's house, where further discussion of the subject was being held, that I should set forth in two days. This morning, however, the *man of talent* was again marshalled up to my cot to place the

subject before me in another phase; viz. the inutility of my going northward; its inexpediency in my present indisposed condition; his willingness to give evidence there as to that condition, and to vindicate the character of my host from any aspersions, &c. &c. This may serve as a specimen of the great discussion which frequently occurs on the most trivial subjects, not so much from want of decision as from a habit and aptness for debate among the people; which has led my dragoman to remark upon the great difference in this respect between them and the Turks, and upon the great superiority the former evince in expressing their ideas with readiness, liveliness, and I may add often with eloquence. The man of talent justified his character so far as the occasion admitted, for he advocated both sides of the question equally well.

Aghsmûg, 29th.—Nine days ago I arrived at this station, which had been fixed upon for me. The day before arriving at it brought us within distinct hearing of the sounds of war; for the Russian army was then on its return to Semez, (from which valley this glen is only six miles distant,) where it arrived on the 21st. Its movement into the plain of Anapa was for the purpose of forming a junction there with a strong body of infantry and twelve hundred cavalry, which had come with provision and stores from the mouth of the Kûban; and its return to Semez was for the purpose of placing a garrison of fresh troops in the fort, and provisioning it for the winter; fears being entertained (according to the report of a prisoner whom I have questioned here) of sending

supplies by sea, since the heavy losses that have been there suffered. Three hundred carts with these stores accompanied the army, or, as I should rather say, the army, whose entire force is stated to be about eight thousand men, escorted them; its movements having been made for that object solely. The chiefs, however, anticipating probably the immediate perpetration of the loudly-threatened devastation of the country, were on the alert to oppose it, and on the 22d I received a message from Mensûr, the '*de facto*' commander-in-chief, requesting me to despatch a person to Shapsuk to bring forward their forces. My host here, who, as well as his brother, stands in high repute for courage and fidelity, instantly mounted, and set forth on this mission; and brought me back word that the chiefs in question had already concerted measures among themselves, and would proceed to the scene of action forthwith. A day or two thereafter our hamlet, as well as all those around, were thronged by their levies '*en route.*'

Daily and occasionally considerable discharges of artillery and musketry are heard here, and the unaccountable delay of the Russians in the valley of Semez, where no devastation was being committed by them, having made me at length desirous of seeing what was going forward, I appointed the 20th for that purpose, when an escort arrived for me; but the day proved so densely foggy that I was obliged to defer my expedition till the next. The firing, however, rather increased that day, and, as I subsequently learned, it was entirely on the side of the Russians, who were alarmed by the voices of parties of Circas-

sians hovering around them, and thus sought to ensure their safety from attack. Luckily, *vox et præterea nihil* but the sick air, was wounded.

The 27th proved clear, though rainy, cold, and windy; and having got the escort of *Hatûx* Khetagatsh (the brave old Shapsuk chief of the fosse, of whom I have spoken), and others from his province, we set forth early for the field. We reached it a little before noon, and there found the Russian army lighting its camp-fires, and taking its station for the day, to recover from the fatigue of a march of about three miles; viz. from the northern extremity of the valley of Semez to a small plain amid the hills which bound it in that direction. On the two previous days, marches of similar extent had been all that was achieved; but my wonder at such tardy progress was diminished when I saw the state to which the face of the country had been brought by the torrents of rain which had fallen on the night of the 21st, on the 24th, and on the night of the 26th, which must have made the clay of the valley of Semez almost impassable for artillery and loaded vehicles, and the ascent of its hills but little less so; and when I saw further proof of the impediment that had been occasioned to the army in the numerous parties of Circassians hovering around it in search of points for attack. The position I found it in seemed to me to offer none, as the small plain it occupied was surrounded, on all sides but one, by ridges of low hills which the artillery could sweep on any enemy presenting himself—and which it continued to do from time to time; while on the remaining side to the north it

was defended by a higher hill, the summit of which was occupied by a strong body of infantry, with a piece or two of artillery. Yet out of these unpromising circumstances the wary old chief Mensûr contrived to reap a small advantage. He made three or four of his party parade inside one of the hills, in order to tempt a body of cavalry, stationed at hand, to attempt to capture them, which attempt was accordingly made; and the decoys, refraining from escape until their pursuers had nearly reached them, the Russians were thus drawn over the verge of the hill and within reach of Mensûr and his party, who were there concealed, and who, dashing in amongst them, cut down some fifteen before they could retreat, or receive support, as they did, from the rapid advance of a body of infantry, which obliged Mensûr's small party to retire. He headed the charge, and his keen Damascus blade put three of the Muscovites '*hors de combat.*' Old Shamuz and his party had stationed themselves at the foot of the highest hill, within range of the guns of the main body, but sheltered from them in a little nook, where they had lighted a fire, and were consoling themselves with a social pipe. Other parties hemmed in the Russians on all sides; but the lesson given them by Mensûr sufficed for that day, and none of them ventured again from beyond protection of their artillery.

On the 28th the army made a further movement of about other three miles along the summit of the hills in question to where they terminate in the valley of Anapa; in doing which a body of Circassians, numerically much weaker than the cavalry of the

enemy, did all in their power to bring the latter to action, but without effect. This morning the whole army decamped long before day, and aided by hard frost, moonlight, and better roads, made its way rapidly towards Anapa and its neighbouring redoubts. Occasional long-shots were all that occurred further on either side. No devastation was committed by the Russians in the valley of Semez. Four houses were burned there, but it was the natives who destroyed them, to deprive their enemies of so much shelter. Between Semez and the present position of the army all the mischief it effected was carrying off a quantity of corn stored in four houses among the hills it passed over, and doing the same by what hay was to be found near the route thence.

Thus has passed away *for the present* the phantom of devastation with which the Russian general sought to terrify the people into his terms of subjugation. Whether such a project was ever seriously entertained by him, or what may have caused its abandonment (if finally abandoned), must remain known to himself; but it occurred to me from the first, that the nature of the country must render the undertaking a most arduous one in the depth of winter, unless to a very small extent. But the cause of this change of measures may lie in the sickness, which is said to prevail in the army to a great amount, as I can well believe—wet as, of late, has been the ground it slept on. There is also a great falling off in the number of Circassian auxiliaries from the provinces of the east, as compared with former years, when it was five or six

times greater, enabling the mounted portion of the army to show some independence of action, which in the late expedition it dared not. The number of Circassians at present with the army is about a hundred. On the 28th they were placed in the rear, or the van, as it became on the advance of our party, and showed a disposition to accept the challenge given to the cavalry in general, when one of them drew his sabre, and rushing in front of the rest, loudly protested, as was heard on our side, against the iniquity of their fighting against their co-religionists, who were justly at war with their common enemy. They immediately retired. This person, who is of high rank, and detained among the Russians on a frivolous plea, has gained golden opinions from all his countrymen here by the information, excellent advice and encouragement, he has of late, from time to time, contrived to communicate to them. Upon a portion of his information as to persons who have clandestinely visited the camp, I am now acting, in the exertion of all the influence I possess, to get exemplary punishment executed forthwith upon some of the most daring of these delinquents, which is promised me by all those tamatas (seniors) I have as yet seen on the subject. This patriotic individual shall be nameless, lest injury should befall him; but I fear his zeal has already brought him into danger.

All the prisoners and deserters are loud in their praise of General Rayevski, who has relaxed the duties, increased and improved the rations, and, above all, established punctuality in the distribution

of spirits; for the soldiers serving on *this side* the Kûban. Probably these measures are adopted in the hope of arresting desertion, the amount of which has been so great as to cause (it is said) expressions of mortification to fall from the lips of His Imperial Majesty.

There is at present, and chiefly in this part of the country, a sad deficiency of the munitions of war, particularly powder and flints, owing to a deficiency in the importation from Turkey of sulphur and flints, and to a supply of sulphur found near the surface of the ground in a certain locality not far from this having unfortunately got exhausted. Consequently a great portion of each of the three days before the retreat of the enemy towards Anapa, was consumed in my answering applications from numerous individuals, who sometimes left the field of battle and followed me five or six miles to beg a flint or a few charges of powder and balls, the serving out of which I had to superintend personally in order to make my small stock go as far as possible.

While this was going forward within doors, there was, inopportunely enough, brought me for medical advice, Osman, a former acquaintance, a remarkably brave young warrior from Adughûm, who only ten days before had received a concussion of the brain and other injuries by a fall with his horse. On the second day of his visit, when the roar of the firing was almost incessant, he became perfectly miserable at seeing and hearing these applicants from the field; mutteringly bewailing, in the corner where he lay, his hard fate, that he had not died to prevent his

being left to be degraded to a woman. His impatience at length became so great that he had himself dressed to set forth, notwithstanding that his right arm is almost powerless; his right eye entirely so (from the falling of the eyelid), and the vision of the left greatly impaired; and all my arguments about the imprudence of such an attempt: but on coming to the examination of his *hazirs* (the cartouche-tubes on the breast) he found that some kind friend, during his late insensibility, had wisely relieved them of his powder. He left me, however, immediately; but whether for the purpose of fitting himself for the field elsewhere, or of going home to attend to my prescriptions, I do not yet know.

Soon after my arrival *Kûsht* Vardan, my sensible host, left to me the charge of his indisposed brother—who had got fever from keeping watch on the hills in these inclement nights—and went to join his countrymen in arms; and I was amused with the *nonchalance* with which his wife and niece—or adopted daughter—aided in his preparation for the field, from which the death-sounds of musketry and artillery were then so audible; the former placidly remarking to Luca, "I might have cried if this were the first time; but we have now grown used to it."

Aghsmûg, 30th November.—Being now again in midst of the tedious Ramazan moon, our only meals are dinner immediately after sunset, and breakfast between four and five in the morning. After having discussed the latter this morning, and while seated on my divan which serves for me a sofa by day and a bed by night, I began to think of finishing the night's

repose, Miss Paak, niece of my host, entered in full dress to beg the loan of a handkerchief, as the morning was very cold—"Pray, where may you be going at this early hour?" "To"—such a one's—"don't you hear the cry?" that is, the wake-cry raised for some one who had just expired, and on hearing which the neighbours are in duty bound to go and join in it, while messengers are sent for those more remote.

Yesterday when I had no expectation of such an event, I was surprised and agitated (which is now the effect) by the display of two large packets of letters for me brought to Khissa by a servant of Nadir Bey, who has just returned from Constantinople. These letters are from the October of the past year, up to the April of the present—such is the painful interruption to correspondence, not from want of opportunities, but of careful messengers; yet it is sufficiently remarkable that on this blockaded coast have safely arrived all the letters that have been written me from England since I left it in September 1836, up to the above last-mentioned date.

The letters now received are accompanied by a portion of "The Times" of 19th December 1837, by which I see fully disclosed for the first time the tergiversation of our Foreign Secretary in regard to this unfortunate country, and I fear I must add to Turkey also, since the interests of both are inseparably interwoven.

Gracious Heavens! can it be possible that England too, after centuries of such glory, is already drawn within that vortex, that imperial *maelstrom*, which,

if sufficiently powerful to inthrall her, must soon engulf the freedom and enlightenment of more than a fourth part of our species—and that quarter the boasted best—Can it be possible that the pristine spirit of adventure, and the rare tact and sagacity displayed by Daûd Bey, in throwing himself alone among a people reputed ferocious, for the purpose of making of their country an impregnable outwork (as it might be made) for the defence of Turkey, of Persia, and of India, have been unappreciated by his countrymen, and his labour of years consigned to demolition;—that I have been only an unconscious tool in the vast laboratory of modern Machiavellism—that I have been pushed forward by fallacies into this last strong-hold of freedom in the East, to lure its heroic sons, with an *ignis fatuus* of hope, on to ground that must shortly sink beneath their feet, and leave them helpless in the grasp of their ruthless antagonists—that in fine, instead of being, as I once fondly hoped, but one of the first of many coadjutors in aiding to assert here the commercial rights of my own country, and to achieve the salvation of this one, I am to be left alone—branded as an incendiary, and despised as a contrabandist? No, I cannot, I will not believe that England is prepared to be led passive in the triumph of the Imperial Despot; and as I now know that there are many who are labouring to expose and to counteract the mischief contrived by his English auxiliaries, I will remain at my post, and continue to encourage this long-suffering people to hope and trust, as I still do, in the eventual ascendancy, for the just cause in which they struggle—national independence.

7*th*.—On the 1st I had visits of *Kûsht* Hasesh, a brave *tamata* of Adughûm; Hatûkh Uzûkh, a gallant warrior and enterprising merchant of this neighbourhood, and of others. Having got out of all patience at not having heard of the departure of Hasesh (the envoy) with his important despatches—although northerly winds had prevailed during the six previous days—I gave vent to my feelings on the subject, and explained to these persons the great injury done to their cause through such shameful disregard of time; not only by the opportunity thus afforded to their enemy to make further progress in the conquest of the country, but by the opinion that must arise abroad, of there being here an entire absence of unanimity, or an equally deplorable want of system, of activity, and of common sense.

In the progress of my harangue I got perhaps a little too warm, and was edified (and not a little mortified) by the contrast afforded in the mild tone in which Hasesh replied; pleading guilty to the generality of my charge and deprecating only the charge of inactivity. To which I rejoined, that I spoke only of the light in which their conduct would be viewed by those at a distance, who in spite of all that I had asserted, as to the answer of the country having been readily and unanimously given, would still be at a loss to account for its not having been sooner despatched. Uzûkh then told me that he felt equally impatient with myself at the delay of Hasesh, and had come over for the express purpose of borrowing a horse (his own having just been wounded), that he might go to the coast and do his utmost to get the

vessel off. Then turning to *Kûsht* Hasesh (who was in his way home after having spent sundry days and nights in warfare), he energetically appealed to him upon the necessity of his abandoning his other duties for the present, and accompanying him in an excursion to the coast, representing to him the many occasions on which he had shown readiness to sacrifice his life for his country; of the incidents of some of which he complimentarily reminded him, and that now all he was called on to sacrifice was a few days of his time. Of one of these occasions I have just heard from *Kûsht* Vardan, who says that a few days since Hasesh and he having found themselves in presence of a considerable body of Russian horse, the former, whose beard is already all blanched, turned to him gaily (for he is full of gaiety and spirit), and merely saying "Follow me," dashed in among the enemy with his sabre and cut his way through without receiving any injury. Vardan, who enjoys a high character for bravery, candidly owns he had not courage to follow such an example.

The result of our conversation was, that the two persons I have mentioned, and another, set out for Jankhoti. Next day, however, they returned at full speed to communicate to me the gratifying intelligence, they had obtained on the road, of the vessel having got safely off four days previously, and as the wind has been favourable and moderate for several days, I have little doubt that our envoys are long since safely landed, to the infinite mortification of those who have so long watched for their capture; for two or three small Russian vessels appeared to have this duty specially assigned them.

On the 3rd, I was told by Navrûz, a dependant of Sefir Bey, that it is the intention of the prince to proceed in person to London with the Circassian answer, and that bow, armour, and other Circassian appurtenances of war, were at his desire sent him for the journey. This information gives a new gust to the whole affair, over which I have so long ruminated; and—taken in connexion with the abandonment of all consideration of this country by our foreign secretary, of which I am now too well assured, and the mention by Sefir Bey of Nadir Bey having brought him the aforesaid "communication of the Grandees"—it tends to confirm me in the surmise I have often and long entertained, that the whole of the prodigious excitement that has occurred here, through a supposition of Turkey and England having jointly called upon the Circassians to express their opinion and wishes as to the political destiny they would prefer, has been caused by my countryman, and able and enthusiastic fellow-labourer in this cause, having—as an alternative for the defeat we experienced in getting ambassadors sent with him and the defeat he feared I might experience in having them sent after him—got Sefir Bey to write to his countrymen for an address to be taken by him to England! *

* Through what influence I know not as yet, the original of this highly interesting and important document has been suppressed, and my endeavours to recover it have been unavailing. The quest however shall be continued, both in justice to the Circassians, and in hope that the time is at hand when such an expression of their national will must be deemed valuable in England.

It would thus appear that another of many impositions has been practised upon the Circassians by their countrymen; and although the fruit of it may be good in having produced a stronger appeal to England than could perhaps have been otherwise obtained; although I have lost irremediably an opportunity of seeing so much of the country and its chiefs as I would have had, in aiding to get signatures to the address, had the messenger sent for me done his duty; and although I would, even in such participation, have been entirely innocent as to the imposition; yet it may perhaps eventually prove as well that I had no hand in giving it effect.

As it is now eight days since the movement towards Anapa, and I have heard of none other but a very short one northward, I have again had difficulty to make out what General Rayevski and his army have been about or intend; having given him credit for honestly purposing to ravage the country as he threatened. Latterly, however, it was given out that, at all events, the small vale of Psebebsi was to be ravaged by special orders *from the Emperor;* because there is the hamlet of that prime "malignant," Haûd-okû Mensûr, who contrives and conducts the chief inroads on the Russian territory, and who also led in the foray upon the colonial hay-makers in the plains to the north of Anapa. While the general was still near his fort at Semez, and Mensûr busy making up a force to attack him whenever he should set forth from it, the latter received word from headquarters, that he need not give himself the trouble of coming with his warriors to Semez, as he and they,

at all events, might make themselves sure of receiving a visit in their own neighbourhood.

To this martial courtesy Mensûr sent a courteous reply, that he would be happy to see the general at his hamlet, and if he would bring *but ten men with him* he would receive him there alone; that he might stay with his army in the country so long as he pleased, and do it as much mischief as he could, but that he must not object to Mensûr leading an equal force across the Kûban, by and bye, and remaining within the Russian territory for like time and purpose. In consequence of all this, and as the information the Circassians obtain through their countrymen with the Russian army as to its intended movements, has almost invariably proved correct, it seemed to be fully concluded upon among them that the first essays at devastation would be made along the undulating plain of the greater Hokhoï, the most direct and practicable approach to the opening of the vale of Psebebsi. But as the army has so long halted further to the south, where a portion of it is employed in cutting down the jungle in which Mensûr and his men concealed themselves (as others did at other times), for attacks on the agricultural colonists, it is now supposed that the large valley of Vastogaï, which was formerly ravaged by Williaminef, may first be attempted. Time will show; meanwhile the Russians are not left at rest in the uninhabited district where they now remain, and are obliged to keep their artillery in constant play to prevent further annoyance.

An amusing conversation took place at my fire-

side the other evening about the determination come to by the Circassians to destroy everything they cannot remove out of the way of the Russian army; in respect of corn to which, above all other things now in danger, more regard is thought due, as being the constituent of "the staff of life"—bread; for which Mussulmans have a religious veneration that should be known to all who come among them. Thus I have frequently observed the care with which crumbs or pieces of it which have fallen upon the ground were removed into a corner or thrown into the fire (not out of doors, though fowls were at hand to eat them), lest by accident they should be trodden upon, and thus this prime gift of God be degraded.

My simple-minded, practical host and a man from Semez, who has removed his family here on account of the invasion, were the disputants; the latter maintaining the impropriety of burning corn, and the former its necessity on the present emergency. At length, said our guest, in the hope of "flooring" his antagonist; "It is contrary to the injunctions of our book" (the Koran). "You will have enough to do," coolly replied our host, who says his prayers with all punctuality, "if you try to abide by all that's in our book, for a great deal of nonsense is written there!"

The evening before last all the damsels of our glen accompanied by my gay young Georgian, and taking with them a goat, cakes, &c., went over the hill to the neighbouring glen to spend the night singing, dancing, telling stories, and carousing (that is the

young men only) in the chamber of a young man who has just been brought home frightfully wounded; part of his lower jaw having been shot away, and his tongue maimed. He had not been able to speak till that night, when he made light of his calamity to those who were deploring it, adding, "We must all suffer for our country." He had what most of us would think suffering enough otherwise, being without even a mattress to lie on, or bed-clothes in this wintry weather. I was not before aware that it is a general custom in these cases for visitors to take presents of eatables.

The chief item of wealth belonging to my host and his brother (for unless a division, which is always an equal one, be demanded, brothers enjoy the inheritance of their father in common) seems to consist in forty or fifty head of cattle, with which the latter has to-day gone to a hill-forest at some distance, there to remain with them (cooking for himself and sleeping in a hovel) for two months of the very depth of winter, and separated from his wife and family, who remain in this hamlet,—here is hardihood!

8*th*.— Alas, alas! the military troth of General Rayevski is broken; and, after all his vaunting threats, he and his army have absolutely sneaked home to their winter-quarters. Khetagatsh — the grey-headed hero of the fosse at Abûn—has just arrived from the Circassian army to communicate to me this grateful intelligence. The heads of the columns had for a day or two been turned towards Jamatia (a fort near the mouth of the Kûban), and when he set out, the whole force was already far

advanced northward, though still making but very tardy progress—occasioned partly no doubt by the bad state of the country, and partly, it is possible, by a desire to save appearances, for which purpose perhaps, also, Rayevski on his retreat sent word that he should return early in spring and make the Circassians repent of having refused to listen to his present proposals.

When I called the intelligence grateful, I spoke only of my own feelings; for mortification seemed to be the predominant one with Khetagatsh, as he dilated upon the magnitude and excellence of the Circassian force, horse and foot, latterly assembled to withstand the Russians whenever they should have quitted the level country, and upon the great preparation they had made for another trial of the fosse system of warfare—on which it would appear that he, as having given proof of its excellence, had lectured with more effect than all we had formerly said on the same subject.

Further attempts had been made repeatedly, but in vain, to bring the Russian cavalry to action with the Circassian.

On the former visit of Khetagatsh, I had begged him to represent to the other *tamatas* the great expedience of inflicting punishment immediately upon those who had been known to have held traitorous communication with the army, and he now told me that he was returning to Shapsuk for the express purpose of bringing other seniors to aid in this affair.

I do not profess much acquaintance with military

matters, but when I reflect upon the frequent and long-continued roars of artillery and musketry the Russians indulged in during the late march, and compare them with all I can learn of the casualties thereby occasioned among the Circassians, it appears to me that the former were superfluously profuse of their ammunition, and that they must have aimed more at keeping their enemies at a respectful distance than at destroying them. Perhaps, however, my notions have got contracted, from living of late amid poverty of powder and lead, for a Circassian never fires unless he can make sure of his man. So far as I can learn, the whole losses of the Circassians, in killed and wounded during this progress, have not amounted to twenty; while of the Russians you have seen, that nearly as many were sabred in the single exploit of Mensûr and his men.

The Russian army has fairly evacuated the country, we may therefore now sum up its achievements; and, instead of the wide sweeping devastation by which it was to compel the people to submit, these will be found to have been the plundering of some corn and hay; the destroying of about half-a-dozen houses on its line of march; and the cutting down of a few acres of jungle!

Whether General Rayevski ever intended attempting the general devastation of this part of the country, or merely of the valley Psebebsi, or only sought by such threats to frighten the people into treating with him, and to detain numbers of them at home (removing their property), so that he and his army might retreat more safely, must remain best known

to himself; but none of his objects, excepting the last (and that but partially), have been attained, and I cannot but think that this campaign, terminating as it has done, must add greatly to the admiration the Circassians have already excited. Let us review the circumstances.

In the autumn of last year his majesty the Emperor visited this country for the first time (and so far as I remember it is the only Imperial visit that has occurred since the days of Peter)—not, as may well be supposed, on pleasure, but for the manly purpose of seeing with the eye of a master wherein his servants had failed in their duty; permitting his arms to be disgraced, and the character of his government to be lowered in the estimation of Europe, whose compassion had been drawn upon the protracted struggles of a victim which should have been sacrificed out of hand. In consequence of this visit of inspection, Marshal Rosen, the nominal governor of the province, and Williaminef the general commanding here under him, were displaced and degraded, and the governor of Anapa also displaced; but whether degraded or not I have not heard. We may presume that in place of these individuals—thus judged insufficient—others of undoubted capacity were installed; and that at their disposal were placed every resource the occasion appeared to require. In proof of which we have seen that the military and naval force employed for the campaign was more powerful than that of any previous year; that the campaign was begun much earlier—as it has been continued much later—than formerly; that the pay of the auxiliaries was exor-

bitant; that extraordinary exertion was otherwise used, both in the north and south, to increase their number; and that the treatment of the native soldiery employed was greatly altered for the better. And after all this mighty preparation and determination to finish the contest by a blow, what has been the result? Four sod-walled forts constructed on the coast, the landing of the army, for which purpose was effected entirely by means of broadsides from ships-of-the-line; while instead of any nearer prospect of the termination of the contest having been obtained, the spirit of resistance is at this moment more erect, better organised, and more thoroughly proved to be generally efficient than at any period since acquaintance with the affairs of the country was formed four years since by Mr. Urquhart; and the sphere of this spirit is now extended—as has been shown—among a people in the south who had for many years acquiesced in the usurpations of Russia. In addition to all which it is to be recollected that she has now another war in hand with the Tshetshenses and their neighbours, against whom an equal amount of military force with that sent here this year has just been employed; and that all the provinces on the upper portion of the Kûban, which for seven or eight years past have ceased taking part in hostilities against Russia, now wait but a favourable reply to the document sent to Sefir Bey—to which the seals of all their chiefs are appended—to combine in a general league with their countrymen for the maintenance of their general welfare. But alas for Circassia! Like others—"non ab omne parte beata"—while

her internal prospects have brightened under her heroic constancy; her external hopes have—through the baleful influence of political levity—become more portentously gloomy than ever; and she must sink —irremediably overwhelmed—if such they shall much longer continue.

LETTER XXVI.

SNUG QUARTERS IN THE MIDST OF THE RUSSIAN POSTS — THE DOUANE-SYSTEM OF CIRCASSIA — FORMS OF PROCEDURE IN CRIMINAL TRIALS — INSANITY—THE FEAST OF BEIRAM—THE HOUSES OF FEASTING AND MOURNING—TURKISH SHIP-BROKING — A HERO'S DAUGHTERS — CIRCASSIAN SONG—DISSEPLI THE CIRCASSIAN "TIBBY FOWLER" —WOODCRAFT — METEOROLOGY — NEW YEAR'S DAY — ANOTHER SUITOR TO DISSEPLI—A RUSSIAN DESERTER — CIRCASSIAN KIDNAPPER AND HIS FAMILY—RUSSIAN CIVILISATION.

Sûa Ozerek, 15*th December*, 1838.

My dear ——. I came five days since to this secluded little glen to write, till the latest hour, letters to be sent by a vessel which lies hard by upon the coast in a locality which by the map may appear dangerous enough—as having the fortress of Anapa at no great distance on one hand, and the new fort of Semez still nearer (that is, at one and a half to two hours' journey) on the other; while seaward it is exposed to the frequent reconnaissance of the cruisers. But all this danger is more apparent than real; for the mountainous nature of the country—especially towards Anapa—interdicts any attempt from the garrisons, who dare not budge without artillery; and a landing dare not be attempted without the united forces of several large vessels.

A curious enough dispute has arisen here about

the import duties, as they may be called—each vessel, according to general custom, being required to pay, according to the quantity it brings, from sixteen to sixty measures (two to the kilo, say about three per cent.) of salt, which is equally divided among the families in the immediate neighbourhood, as payment for hauling the vessel on shore, or compensation for the entertainment they have to give those who come from a distance to purchase. No duty, however, is exacted upon other goods, or in case the vessel have no salt. The salt almost always belongs to the captain (or captains, for there are often two), and the sailors also, who bring other small adventures of lead, powder, steel, needles, &c., and appear to have votes in common with the captain as to the general arrangements of the voyage; yet perfect subordination is observed at sea. I may also mention here that on exportation no dues are exacted; but it is customary for each foreign merchant to present the family with which he lodges with five pieces (in the north and ten in the south) of merchandise, (valued at about twenty piastres or four shillings each,) for each serf he exports; and 400 okas of wax, honey, salted butter, or tallow, are considered equivalent in value to a serf, and paid for accordingly. For such compensation the family furnishes lodging and entertainment for the merchant and his serfs, and stowage for his goods, so long as they may remain. In this instance, the vessel on being hauled ashore got capsized among the breakers, so that almost all the salt she had was destroyed. *Hûraïkû* Hasesh, my worthy host, who is *tamata* of the glen, and *bizim* (protector)

of the captain and crew, decided therefore, without consulting his neighbours, that, in consequence of this disaster, the usual dues should not be exacted.

The neighbours, however, are highly discontented with this decision—arguing that although so much of the salt was lost, yet they have been put to the usual expense and inconvenience in entertaining those who came to purchase; and they have declared Hasesh to be a *haram*—a sort of *unfriend*, as Scott calls it—and engaged not to enter his hamlet, even in cases of death, marriage, &c., until this affair be arranged to their satisfaction.

On the day of my arrival, I saw a tidy schooner enter the bay of Sûgûljak (Semez), and despatch a boat to the new fort; and the day before yesterday she passed close by the opening of this glen, standing to windward for Anapa, so as I believe no other Russian craft in the Black Sea could. I doubt not she was our Vixen—and it gave me something like a thrill of mortification or jealousy to see the baggage already so tractable in the hands of her new masters.

I have had two visits here from our former *bizim*, Shamuz, who so earnestly, repeatedly, and humbly begged pardon for his past offences—imputing them entirely to misconception of my character and intentions, which he has now discovered to be altogether "precious and generous," &c. &c.—that I thought it expedient to waive the subject for the present; determining, however, if ever he should renew the reproach he made to Luca about my not returning to his house, to assign him my reasons for not recurring to our former footing of friendship; and I purpose cautioning

any of my countrymen against placing much confidence in him, because I believe him to be by nature incapable of an implicit return. He is eminently patriotic, brave, and sagacious; but avaricious and bigoted in an almost equal degree. I have reason to believe, however, that he has withstood immensely advantageous offers from the Russians, in regard to sending my countrymen and me away, in which case they have latterly promised, if required, to afford me the opportunity of escape, by withdrawing the cruisers, when it may be thought proper to get me shipped off.

In passing through the valley of Semez, as we did diagonally, I saw very little evidence of an enemy having been there before us, and but one hamlet (which had much need of rebuilding) partially burnt. The advance to and return from the fort had been along the bases of the hills on each side of the valley, the centre having been then impracticable for heavy carriages. The new fort appears to be the smallest yet constructed on the coast, except Doba. It is distant from the shore, on the N.W. of the bay, about three quarters of a mile; stands on a slight eminence, and has its communication with the sea preserved by means of what appeared to me in form like a Martello-tower, but also of small dimensions.

Ozerek, 16*th*.—In the course of conversation with Shamuz and *Kûsht* Haseh, whom he brought with him, I observed to them, that the Russians having entirely renounced their project of a winter campaign, there appeared to be no further necessity for my

remaining in the country, and that at Constantinople I thought I could be of much greater service in explaining fully the state of affairs, and corresponding more regularly with their friends in England; adding, that upon having expressed to *Hatûz* Khetagatsh, among others, how desirable it appeared to me that proceedings should be instituted against the traitors, I had learned from him that he was then proceeding on a mission connected with that affair, which appears to me the only one of imperative necessity, and in which anything beneficial could for the present be effected. Shamuz replied, that the danger of the country and the necessity for my presence had by no means passed away, and that in this very matter, in which they intended to proceed with as little delay as possible, it was greatly to be wished that I would consent to remain yet a little while longer, to strengthen the hands of the faithful, and disconcert the rest; and an assemblage of *tamatas* for a judicial affair being now held at a short distance towards the north, he begged I would proceed there to hear their opinions.

To this I consented; and am now the guest of the chief judge Hadji-okû Mehmet. On crossing the valley of Ozerek, which is the only large one between Semez and Anapa, and which gives its name by usage to the neighbourhood, I was vexed to see, by the dispersing of a multitude on the hills before us, the driving away of cattle, and the firing of small arms, that the trial, which was a case of manslaughter, had terminated with the payment, in cattle and sundry other articles of property, of the covenanted price of

blood. Two hundred oxen, as I have before mentioned, are the legal fine for each death—murder or manslaughter (as we call it)—but as few families possess so many, any other articles that may be offered are taken instead; and these assemblies are juries, for the purposes not only of trying the criminal, but of ascertaining the equivalence of such articles as are substituted for oxen.

As we passed the temporary court of justice—a thatched shed—we had further proof of proceedings having terminated, by its being set fire to, as is invariably done.

The delinquent in this case *appears* to have been insane, as he had killed a boy, and wounded two other persons of a family he had conceived himself aggrieved by, and had entered a house for the purpose of killing one of my countrymen whom he expected to find there. His fraternity had consequently put him to death in the usual manner, by throwing him into the sea with his arms tied; yet his family and fraternity are bound by the Circassian ideas of justice to pay the legal fines for his offences. It may easily be conceived that such institutions, though at variance with our notions of justice in the West, are yet highly conducive to good order, each family and fraternity being deeply interested in watching the conduct of each individual connected with them, lest they should be amerced for his misdemeanor.

The fines payable in this instance were two hundred oxen for a boy killed, and thirty for a young man and two for a woman wounded, the latter having been less severely injured. Of these only the former has

yet been exacted; the parents of the boy having received the value of sixty oxen, and their fraternity the remainder. The payment of the other two is fixed for next summer, and will be proportionably divided among the sufferers and their fraternities. The cause for such division is that the family and fraternity of the delinquent are amenable in similar proportions.

So far as I can learn, insanity is almost unknown in this country. It appears to be a curse attendant on the complications of civilization and commerce.

This hamlet is very picturesquely situated in a small glade among the hills that bound the valley of Ozerek on the north. On halting, however, on the road which passes it, I was greatly annoyed at finding to whom it belonged, and that Shamuz, who had preceded me, had arranged for my putting up there, although some causes for my dissatisfaction with its owner had been explained to him, and had elicited his own disapprobation. But while scolding my dragoman for this Marplot-arrangement, and debating the practicability of finding another "hospitium," the judge with sundry attendants had come out on the little green, on the verge of which, above a clear and thickly-shaded brook, stands his guest-house: and he no sooner saw the demur than he crossed the stream and captured me by my horse's bridle. This alacrity showed that he had expected and had prepared for me; the sun, moreover, had long gone down, and to have broken away from him under such circumstances would have been such dishonour of him that a hot feud must have ensued. His offences, which I believe

to be caused chiefly by another ebullition of his ill-governed temper, did not appear to call for such extremity; I therefore yielded, I dare say with an awkward enough grace, to his civil force; but I had no sooner been seated by his fire-side, than I explained to him my reason for having demanded another domicile; to which he, like his brother Tshupako, Shamuz, had nothing to reply but a strong intercession for pardon.

It is but too common for these free-born Circassians to say and do what comes uppermost when their passions are touched, and among themselves these outbreaks soon heal and are forgotten. I would fain convince them that we are not accustomed to such unreasonable conduct, or at all events know how to resent it.

But this consideration, although important, is less so than the affairs of the country now in hand; and for these, the cordial co-operation of the two individuals in question is highly desirable. I must therefore postpone further enforcement of my lesson with them till a more suitable opportunity. The judge in the mean time has done his best to recover my good graces, by the most hospitable entertainment and the ready acquiescence in all my suggestions and wishes, in consequence of which he has commissioned *Kûsht* Hasesh to go to the chief judge of Shapsuk and get from him the last letter of the Russian general, which by his account appears to be a most extraordinary production, and which I think it expedient to send immediately to London, in proof of the alteration of style the Russians have found themselves

obliged to adopt; and in refutation—as I purpose sending in this case the original—of the impudent assertion of the Foreign Office Journals that the letters I sent before were fabrications.

As for the assemblage of *tamatas* I have mentioned, I have found no reason to regret its premature dispersion, another and larger one having been held to-day at this hamlet for celebration of the festival of Beiram, which was announced by the judge last evening wishing me a happy fête.

Before I had risen this morning the congregation had begun to arrive, and in an hour or so had swelled to about 200 persons, many of whom had come from a considerable distance. My little cot has been crammed with them all the morning, entering either to salute me, or to light their pipes and solace themselves after the weary privations of the past month; after which solatium the borders of the brook were crowded with them washing previous to prayers and sermon, with which they are now engaged on a green on the other side. Judge Mehmet is dressed for the occasion in a Turkish pelisse of fine cloth, profusely and handsomely braided with silk trimming, with which his sheep-skin cap contrasts rather oddly. He has brought forth also the *Sanjak-Sherif* of Circassia, which is planted in the midst of our green, and there proudly displaying to a cold breeze from the north the emblems of nationality, it fills me at least with fond dreams of the glories that may hereafter gather around it.

Aksham (evening).—As for the matter about which I was brought here, after a debate among the

seniors, another strong representation of the necessity of my further stay was made to me, and it was finally arranged among them that the judge should write me an address upon the subject, to which the seals of those present and of others should be appended, in order to put all question as to this necessity past doubt. This is to be sent me as soon as possible; meantime, I am about to finish and despatch a packet of letters by the vessel on the coast here, as I think it highly desirable that the friends of this country should be apprised, as soon as possible, of the favourable change its affairs have now taken through the departure of the Russian army.

Aghsmûg, 19*th*.—I am now returned to my former quarters, after an absence of eight days, the four last of which have been celebrations at the judge's; at this and two intermediate hamlets of as many *first* days of Beiram; through discrepancies among the authorities as to the birthday of the moon, which, among persons destitute of all astronomical calculation, must, in cloudy weather, of course be all guess-work. The festival lasts three days, during which little or no work is done, and which are spent by the young people especially in going from house to house to visit their friends. But the first is the great day, after the divine service of which, horse-racing, mark-firing, &c., take place when the locality and weather are favourable. In the judge's sermon on the 16th, which lasted above an hour, he did not omit making a strong representation to his hearers as to the political duties incumbent upon them at this crisis.

22*nd*.—I had imagined from having heard of none

other, that marriages were almost the sole occasion of merry-makings. I have been agreeably undeceived; for yesterday morning my young Georgian asked permission to escort the young ladies of this glen to a dance in a neighbouring one, which proved to be a regular Circassian assembly, which it might be well that some of the subscribers to Almack's should attend, that they might see the simple but perhaps more genuinely joyous original of their highly-wrought orgies. The evening was snowy and cold, the thermometer then ranging during night about 15° below freezing point. Yet, away these young folks set in the dark to cross these bleak hills, "impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps," for three miles; and, oh! ye carriage or chair-borne worshippers of Terpsichore, what comparison will your foot-worship, in your gilded and lustrous temples, bear with that of those who, after such a preamble, pass the night at their devotions beneath an inclement sky, and, superior to impediments, weave their mystic circles upon a substratum of hay! But as it is little likely that my recommendation will be attended to, I must explain that the hamlet was crowded with visitors—for here balloting being unknown, all who choose attend, (and the old, by-the-by, of our hamlet did so with the young,)—the majority of whom danced in an immense circle on a bedding of hay laid round a proportionably great bonfire; while others awaited their turn in a cottage, singing or conversing. About midnight my attendant, who has become "sophisticated" by some years' residence in Constantinople, returned satiated, de-

claring that he saw no prospect of a termination to the *rout*, as the sheep to be boiled for supper was only being killed when he set forth on his return. Yet it did terminate, and our young folks, on their return here in the morning, found that, instead of taking some rest, they had to go some distance in another direction to attend the "wake" for one just dead, to which they had been called during the night. Such are the equally hardy pleasures and duties of the Circassian fair!

31*st*.—The captains of the vessel at Ozerek assured me that they only waited a fair wind to depart in ballast, with or without passengers; but it turns out that Turks though they be, they lied like others of their craft, in the hope of getting freight more speedily; and a number of persons having made them promises on the condition of a delay of six weeks or two months, they have consented to this, and have stowed away themselves, crew and rigging, in a "bothie" of their own "bigging" on the coast, till spring! But in their justification I must add that it is also stated that it was the sailors who objected to go without benefit, and thus lose by both voyages. Be that as it may, I consider the delay very prejudicial to the "public service," and am therefore seeking to remedy it.

During the invasion by Williaminef, one of the many military devotees of this country, a tokav of this neighbourhood, of whose courage much is still spoken, got wounded. Yet no sooner was he dressed than he returned to the field, when his horse was shot, and fell upon his leg, so that he could not

extricate himself before a body of Georgians came up. He was alone; yet instead of surrendering, he drew his sabre, and fought till he was slain; and it is averred *by many* that he was actually "embowelled" upon the spot, and some of his intestines carried off, on account, as the narrators suppose, of a virtue attributed by the Russians or their allies to the stomach of a brave man. I leave to antiquaries to determine if this were "Hal's" opinion, my business being with the two daughters of my hero, who during my late absence came here (and they returned home the same day, a distance of eight or ten miles), bringing as a present for me a great mess of gomil (flour and honey boiled and fermented), in delivering which they said; "It is all we can do in memory of our father; for had he been alive, he would have invited Yakûb Bey, who has come so far for our good, to have spent a few days at our hamlet, which we cannot do."

I have had many, many instances of the gratitude of these people; yet this one touched me more than ordinarily; and as I had expressed a wish for another visit of these considerately kind girls, in order that I might give them some proof of my estimation, they came again a few days ago, and spent a day with us, an hour or so of the evening of which they passed in my cottage, together with the eldest daughter of my host, who after a little coyness yielded to the pursuasions of my gay young attendant, and favoured me with a song, which broke the ice for the other two; and all three thereafter made little difficulty in each taking her turn to display the treasures of the Circassian muse.

The generality of the songs were of the description I have given you formerly—a recitative, with a sort of wailing accompaniment, commenced a bar or two after; varied a little each alternate verse, and continued a little longer than, the other—thus affording breathing time for the principal performer. All three occasionally sung together, and all the songs had love and war for their burthen, but two, one of which was abuse of a girl who had just fled with her lover into the Russian territory, on account of their relatives having opposed their union; and the other, the eulogy of a beautiful woman of Godawhaï. Among the rest, the most lively commenced with the rejection of the suit of a young man by his *cara anima*, because he was not sufficiently brave: he disputes the judgment, and appeals to others for their evidence; they give it against him; a recrimination ensues, and the lover then invites his mistress to go to the river Abûn (on whose banks there is now frequent fighting) that she may judge for herself who is really brave; "for not those who withstand musketry deserve this epithet, but those who advance against cannon—cannon which make the earth tremble, and the fruit to drop from the trees!" This may serve as an illustration of the noble motives that sway the choice of the daughters of Circassia (for here fiction has not yet supplanted reality), and these few days past have afforded me a still more palpable one of those—equally laudable—which influence her sons.

In a neighbouring glen dwells a somewhat spiritless tokav, whose family would thereby be in still more straitened circumstances, were it not for his

treasure of a daughter whose sagacity, adroitness, and extraordinary industry keep the family in a constant supply of friends, and of presents. She is peculiarly famous in all the country round for her fabrication of silver lace, a love of which is the dominant fashionable foible of these people; and as I wished to have some articles of this fabric repaired, I paid her hamlet a visit, after having learned that she was willing to work for me. I had heard, moreover, of the many advantageous offers of marriage she had refused from young men egregiously brave, handsome and wealthy. Judge then of my surprise, after being seated a while in the guest-house, to see enter it, and descend from a high pair of pattens—which, with her scull-cap and corslet, were profusely ornamented with silver lace—a maiden of the stuntiest of figures, tawniest of complexions, and plainest, if not ugliest of features; whose coarse, though capacious forehead, small eyes, projecting cheek-bones, expansive mouth, and protruding teeth, would—as I should have thought—have been sufficient to chase, at a glance, all ideas of matrimony from the mind of any young man not blind. But I must confess that observation was soon withdrawn from these, by her unembarrassed and cheerful demeanour, and her ready flowing conversation. During the short time she remained beside me, she said little but what concerned the things I came about, modestly admitting that my lace, which was wrought in the family of a chief of Psadûg, could not be imitated here, but promising to do her best in cleaning and repairing it. But she had

Luca brought to the family-house, and there, among other appropriate and well-conceived things, she said to him: "In comparison with you, we are but as the wild hares on these hills; yet we can think a little, and know how to feel for all that you have suffered for us these two years. It would be shameful therefore for me not to be happy to work for you for months if it were necessary, as I shall gladly do."

I wished some cloth dyed in imitation of a colour also from Psadûg, which others had declared to be here impossible; but this clever girl immediately produced some patterns of her own dyeing, among which I found a tint even superior to mine, and she has here another harvest of fame; for she had hitherto kept her skill in this respect secret. Her name is Dissepli, which may be translated "brilliant as silver lace;" *disseh* being the word for that fabric.

Among some songs, by the by, which I lately heard, was a long one, said to be a thousand years (that is, very) old, respecting the wars of the "*Nard*," a people reported by tradition to have formerly possessed this country. Who they can possibly have been I cannot imagine; surely none of the hardy Norse ever found their way into this remote region?

On a subsequent occasion of the young girl's singing to me, I got the Tatar, who was present, to take his turn, and was sorry to find that the Crimean music is as preposterous a pretence—according to our notions—as that of Asiatic Turkey. Both, in fact, seem to be of the same species; one, equally destitute, according to my observation, of beauty or variety; although in the latter respect the defect

may lie with me—for shepherds are said to see a difference in the physiognomy of their sheep, which to others is undiscernible. This Turkish singing—if it deserve the name—seems to me nothing more than an extemporaneous excursion of the voice, which is allowed to wander, "*ad libitum*," wherever it can, without any regard to melody or time; and the pauses between each verse are so irregular and long that I have frequently been surprised by a recommencement, when I thought the drawling minstrel had finally ceased.

The greater part of these two days I have spent searching for "the beds of the roes"—as Ossian says—among the woods of these hills, which is anything but child's play—what with the deep snow and the stunted forms of the trees, that oblige one to go the greater part of the way through them almost on all-fours. I found abundant couchings and traces of the "native burghers"—which are a small species of fallow deer—but there are so many hunters that they have become quite wild, and I could not get a single shot. I saw also frequent prints of wolves. In the woods on the Kûban both are much more numerous, and there I hope soon to awake the echoes of the chase. Hereabouts wild boars, as large as a big calf, are more plenteous, and at times commit great havoc in the stock-yards. A dozen of the race got floundered among the snow here last winter, but the Islamites, ignorant of the relish of brawn, (Westphalias or Wicklows,) fell upon them, sabre in hand, and left their carcases for the dogs! A like number has just been seen in the neighbouring glen, but I have no

idea of aiding in making dogs' meat of them. Occasionally, however, these encounters have another result, the boars making "worms' meat" of the men, as happened with one last winter at Shapsekwa.

Though luckless for the present in the chase, these rambles on the hills—which I can now take alone, being known everywhere—yield reward enough in the exercise; and to-day I was gratified further by a splendid exhibition of a phenomenon, peculiar I believe to these latitudes, or this portion of them; for Potoski, who travelled much elsewhere, remarked upon it as new to him, and he says ancient travellers also did so. I allude to the suspension of the clouds at a very small height. I remember one, on a beautiful day, having swept along the deck of a vessel I was aboard of in the Black Sea. To-day, on the hills—which may be about 1500 feet high—the sky was to be seen beautifully bright, while the plain of the Kûban, and the valleys that branch off from it, were concealed by a dense and vast mass of clouds, whose upward ridges were tinged by the beams of the sun as we see them, from beneath, at his setting; while the distant mountains rose like islands amid the sea of vapour.

4th January, 1839.—On New-year's day it so happened that several friends from different quarters, and each bringing eatables—a lamb, salt fish, and bread—assembled here to visit me, and the good dinner prepared for them served for a celebration of the day, which otherwise might have passed off without notice, being here no holiday. Among my visiters was old Sûbesh, one of the stanchest and

kindest of our friends, who, although he has been here most frequently, excused his absence of late, on account of his having had to construct a new hamlet, a little more out of the Russian line of march than that which he formely inhabited. Next day, having kindly undertaken a matrimonial mission for a brave, handsome, and wealthy young friend of his, who is said to be deeply enamoured of Miss Dissepli, (or her handiwork, I don't know which,) he proceeded across the hill on the east, to her father's hamlet. But this application has only gone to swell the list of "rejected addresses," for it met with a decided refusal. Her determination, it is said, is to remain single, unless she can be united to one rich enough to be able to maintain her unemployed, except by her favourite occupations; or can be taken to Turkey. But, alas! such wealth is very rare in this part of the country; and as for the Turks, personal beauty is more in vogue among them than silver lace. Her spring, too, is fled; for it is twenty years since her family removed to this neighbourhood, and she had then attained her full growth. I fear her doom is "to waste her sweetness on the desert air."

Another of my visiters was Hûssein, a merchant of Semez, who was obliged to quit finally his former hamlet, as the new fort is within a gun-shot of it. He permitted to come here at the same time a Russian who has lately deserted, and whom I wished to get information from. This man, like all the rest, speaks highly of Rayevski, the new general, and as strongly against the rapacity and rigour of Williaminef, his predecessor; who, he says, not only half-starved and

wholly overworked the soldiers, but withheld from them for his own benefit almost all their usual allowances of *vodki* (the spirit served in the army), and twenty kopecks per day, which is the extra pay allowed them when working at the forts, and which Rayevski promised should be forthcoming immediately on the arrival of the army at Taman. He declares that unless the system had been changed, immense desertion would have occurred this year, as had been fully determined on throughout the army; and that, nevertheless, it will assuredly take place (as others also have averred) to a still greater extent should Russia go to war with any *Christian* state; because the general treatment of the soldiery is quite insufferable. His own particular share of it is as good an exemplification as can well be. He has two sons in the army; has served for twenty-seven years, and has all the appearance of a steady veteran. His general good conduct is indeed proved by the rank he had obtained, viz., serjeant-major; but he served under a "devil incarnate" (according to his description) of a *porûtshik* (lieutenant) named Maximovitsh, whose cruelty was kept in check by the system of the new regime so long as Rayevski was present to enforce it, but broke out whenever the general quitted the army, on its march towards the Kûban, and returned to Anapa. During this time he sentenced three soldiers, for some extra indulgence in *vodki*, to undergo flagellation on the bare seat*. One of

* Any officer of the line may, for minor offences, order what corporal punishment he thinks proper to be inflicted upon the men under him. In such cases as desertion the usual punishment (awarded by a court-martial) is the fearful *skvos-stroi* (literally, "through the ranks"); for the

the soldiers underwent his punishment, receiving upwards of 1000 stripes; another to avoid such disgrace and suffering committed suicide; and the serjeant-major for the same reasons deserted. But the thoughts of his family and of the fruits of his long service being lost have made him wish as ardently to return; and his master who has left him in possession of everything he brought with him (which is but too seldom the case) has generously offered not only to permit his return, but to do his best to make his peace with the general.

The army of the south, as I believe I have stated before, was about 5000 strong. Its sole achievement was the erection of the fort at Sashe, the three others having been constructed by the army in which this man served, and which, by his and other accounts, amounted to 10,000 men. Of these about 500 were left in each of the three forts; about 500 died, and a similar number were invalided, chiefly in consequence of a disease which puzzled the army doctors, and is unintelligible, through description, to me. It discoloured the teeth and joints of the men, and those to

administration of which a battalion or two are drawn out in two opposite lines, a space of four to five feet being left between each man for action. Each soldier is armed with a pliant rod of about five feet in length; and, as the culprit passes, he must strike him on the naked back and arms with all his force. An officer follows the culprit and makes a mark on the back of any soldier who strikes feebly, that he in turn may be punished also. Two thousand strokes form the *minimum*, and twelve thousand the *maximum* of the *skvos-stroi* punishment, which, in either case, generally disables a man for life. The still more fearful *knout* is a punishment awarded by the civil authorities. Half-a-dozen blows with the instrument formerly used sufficed to kill a man; but the supply of labourers for the Siberian mines having been thus curtailed, the emperor has of late *mercifully* ordered that a less deadly weapon shall be used.

whom it proved fatal, generally died within seven or eight days. My informant believes that this novel disease and the general sickly state of the whole army, were the causes of its being withdrawn without devastating the country, which had formerly been spoken of among the soldiers. The fort at Semez was left also quite unfinished, and many stores for the army allowed to remain there in the mean time, the general saying they should return to finish that fort and construct another in the spring. I hope to goodness it is destined to bring forth flowers of another dye!

I have spoken much of the beneficial change which is being wrought in society here through administration of the national oath; but as an instance in proof is worth many eulogies, I shall give you one.

On one of the streams of Khissa abode, twenty years since, a tokav—*Dissi* Dûnakhaï—equally fearless and restless; for almost his whole life, fortunately not a long one, was passed in the planning or execution of enterprises for making captures in the provinces on the Kûban. These expeditions, in which he always led, consisted of but a few chosen individuals, and were performed on foot, and thus, after a fatiguing march of from ninety to one hundred miles, over mountains and through forests, would he and his associates, subsisting on nothing but a light stock of *gomil* brought with them, watch, night after night, in the woods, for an opportunity to seize their prey. Nor could this be effected without much danger; for a Circassian is seldom or ever unarmed, and at that period all, according to ancient usage, were continually

on their guard against such depredations. Dûnakhaï had, therefore, many a deadly conflict with the inhabitants of the hamlets he surprised; but unequalled, as it is said he was, in the use of his arms, he never failed to be victor, and of those who attacked him above 100 are supposed to have fallen by his hand alone; while the captives taken by him and his band, are said to have amounted to ten times that number. At length it so happened that among the latter was one in whom a noble in his neighbourhood felt interested, and whose liberation he demanded. This Dûnakhaï peremptorily refused: a violent quarrel ensued, in consequence of which the noble shot him dead, and was himself in revenge shot by a member of the fraternity of the other; subsequently the price of the blood of each was mutually arranged by their fraternities, thus terminating the eventful history of Dûnakhaï. He left three sons (then boys), and had a brother who gave promise of rivalling his fame in every respect; but his career was brought to a speedy termination also, by a violent death in Abazak.

Of the three sons I have already told you, as having been among the foremost of that gallant little band who attacked the Russian army on its landing at Sashe, when one was killed and the other two wounded,—one of the latter was he who was brought in this condition to the guest-house of his *tamata*, Hassan Bey, and who nominated me his surgeon. I grew attached to him, as I found him as gentle and polite in manner—as cheerful, obliging and active in disposition—as he had proved himself

valiant. His younger brother interested me equally; for he made light of his own wound, though on the head; was unremitting and remarkably handy in attending on his brother, and seized every opportunity, whenever he could be spared, to make trips to Sashe to join in attacks on the enemy. It was these two who took the principal charge of the body and effects of Nadir Bey's dragoman when he was shot. I paid two or three visits to their hamlet by invitation, and found everything evince industry, tidiness, and prosperity. But on one of these visits I was shocked at seeing in the guest-house one of their countrymen heavily ironed, whom the elder brother had shortly before captured near the Kûban, in the same hardy manner as did his father. The oath had not then been taken at Khissa!

Now I dare say, with the picture of Dûnakhaï's atrocities before you, and of the example he bequeathed to his sons, you may have difficulty in imagining how any virtues could find nourishment in a soil which produced such monstrous growths. But you must permit me to remind you that not those who act in accordance with, but those who violate the usages and institutions of the community they live in, are to be esteemed miscreants and malefactors; that I have shown you that *property* and *person* are as secure—so far as the neighbours for a great distance around are concerned; that the highways are everywhere as safe—there being no banditti; and that the people are as friendly, charitable, and hospitable to one another, as in any other country whatever;—that law is open equally to all, and not

expensive; and as such virtues are never of speedy growth, the fair presumption is that they have long been naturalised here, and that they co-existed with kidnapping and other exploits of robbery, even when these were in highest vogue. It is necessary to give these and some other circumstances due consideration, in order to arrive at a just comprehension of this singular phase of human society, which, though exhibiting strong symptoms of disruption and dissolution, has survived many other apparently more stable. And if the mere love of gain had been the prime motive for those predatory exploits, it appears to me highly presumable that they would long since have caused such disruption; but remains, as I believe them to be, of wars and feuds which formerly occurred among the various populations by whom the country is inhabited, and of that pride of revenge which, in other countries similarly circumstanced, has been ranked amongst the first of obligations and of virtues, they appear to have been continued as exercise and proof of martial hardihood, long after the cause in which they originated had ceased to exist.

I have indeed had this motive abundantly proved to me not only in conversation about individuals in times past, some of whom I have heard highly lauded for their courage and dexterity in these predatory exploits, and others as contemptuously reproached for having abstained from sharing in them, and remained slothfully at home "like women;" but also in the numerous songs—often the best historical records of such a people, and still much prized, like our "Jacobite relics"— which treat of this subject. In these,

individuals are signalised in both the ways I have mentioned, and the dangers and the glory of the pursuit are portrayed with all the deepest and most vivid of colours imagination has here acquired. Thus their heroes are represented wandering by night through unknown forests, where every tree they encounter may be taken for an enemy, and so forth. In proof also that gain was not the prime motive, I must tell you that many—especially on the first attempt—on returning successful from such an excursion, called their friends together to a feast and rejoicing, at which much more than the value of the spoil acquired was generally spent by them. This publicity proves moreover that such depredations were committed at a distance from their own neighbourhood, robbing in which was always considered highly ignominious, and severely punished when discovered.

To the propagation of Islamism by the Turks, which first suggested the iniquity of these practices, must be attributed much of the glory—true glory—of their cessation. How humiliating after all is the lesson here read to us!—that men, in the aggregate, do not arrive at just estimates of right and wrong by any process of reason; but adopt the one or the other—equally as incontrovertible dogmas—and follow faithfully in the steps of those who take the lead of us flocks of mortals.

Having given a portraiture of the *late* condition of this country*, it is but fair to place in juxtaposition some illustration of the workings of that govern-

* More than six months after the above was written, I was assured by Omar Efendi, a most respectable and amiable Turkish mollah, who has for forty-two years inhabited the neighbourhood of Mamaï, that

ment which aspires to its conquest; that an idea may be formed of what will, in that case, be the lot of the inhabitants: and the principle of the vast machine—centralisation in its fullest development—being well known, I shall confine myself to showing some of its workings.

We learn from Potoski that nearly half a century ago, the Volga was infested by a desperate band of robbers, "not timid boatmen who sought to gain something on returning home; but *deserters* well armed, and commanded by a malefactor, escaped from Siberia." The same evil still exists, because the same cause; viz. the inhuman treatment of the soldiery, has never been in any degree relaxed. I have had full particulars from the Russian deserters, especially two —one at Khissa who served *seven*, and one in this hamlet who served *four years* in these corps of free-booters—whose statements agree in the main; that their treatment in the army drove them to join numerous bodies of deserters who had sheltered in the forests, and issued thence, when in want, to attack travellers, or enter the villages and rob shops or dwelling-houses, committing—like the indiscriminate revenge of the bear robbed of her young—all sorts of atrocities. Incendiary fires are caused by such persons almost nightly in the city of Astrakhan. Nor was want always the motive; for individuals have been mentioned to me who by these means acquired great wealth, especially one who has since established himself in Stavropol. Such a scourge does not exist

there was more honour and good neighbourship among the people formerly than there is now. The evidence of Shamuz, and of other native seniors, is to the same effect.

in any of the civilised countries among which Russia pretends to rank herself: and these troops of desperadoes are not, even partially, like the "companies" which of old infested France, &c.—soldiers, whose discharge had left them in youth without the means of subsistence; for the Russian soldier is never discharged till his youth and strength be exhausted, when he is sent back, pensionless, to his native village, to drag out, as he best may, the miserable remains of a miserable existence; even his clothing, if it be worth any thing, being taken from him. The light in which his lot is viewed was well displayed to me by a Russian officer in the Crimea; who, when driven from all his positions as to the possibility of the soldiers being content with such treatment, replied; "Well, then, they must be considered as monks, who are sacrificed for the good of the community."

The deserter here has confirmed to me the accounts of the deception practised on the Russian peasantry, in order to tempt them to colonise near Anapa. In each town publication was made of the extraordinary advantages of the locality—soil of exuberant fertility—fruit-trees, from which the soldiers regaled in profusion—streams in abundance of the most delicious water—perfect security, &c. &c. All of which, excepting the first, is false! This person, who was for some years cook in the family of Count Orloff, (of which I have had good proof,) informs me further that about five years since, the majority of the military and naval force at Astrakhan were Poles, among whom a conspiracy was got up to seize the shipping, and set sail for Persia, which they would have accomplished had not an officer foolishly confided the secret

of his enterprise to his mistress, who betrayed it to the general, in consequence of which the arms of the Poles were seized during night, themselves dispersed, and their leaders in the conspiracy degraded to the ranks for life.

In this hamlet one of the inmates is a Tatar, who dwelt formerly in Kara-sû, a village of the Crimea, between Theodosea and Simferopol, in which he might have lived with ease and comparative affluence; for his uncle left him a mill and a considerable tract of land, and his father subsequently bequeathed him a house, garden, and other property in land, &c.; but of the former he never received the value of a *para*, as Lambûr, a Greek high in the Russian civil service, took possession of the whole; and the latter, after some years' possession, he was compelled to sell it to Ismael Agha, a renegade noble of his race, who had attained the rank of colonel, and who many years after paid him in quittance only about a third part of the real value. Going to law was out of the question, he says, in either case, as the expense would have ruined him entirely, and the decisions, at all events, could not have been obtained till old age had come upon him; such being the dilatoriness of Russian courts of law: and such he says has been the lot of multitudes, the Tatar nobles who are in favour, and the Russian officers who have established themselves in the country, finding means to seize the small properties into which the land was formerly divided, or to compel their owners to dispose of them at a great sacrifice. Disgusted with the changed condition of his country, and in despair of bettering his own condition, which

on the contrary gradually grew worse, he at length resolved on expatriating himself; and having obtained a merchant's passport, he came to Anapa in the very year unfortunately when it fell into the hands of the Russians, obliging him, with many others, to seek refuge among the Circassians.

But the oppressed among his countrymen are cut off from even this resource, as it has since been ordained that none of them shall receive a merchant's pass without his finding two good sureties for his return!

Among the provinces to the eastward of Shapsuk which made terms of peace with Russia, and over which, since their pretended annexation to the empire, General Sass has been nominated military commander, is Makhosh, on the west of the Laba, near which he holds his head quarters. Among these terms were the return of deserters. Nevertheless, about three to four years ago, seventy-two persons—Tatars of Khazan, with their wives and families, and some Poles—escaped into the above-named province from the Russian frontier, and begged from a certain chief, Psesokhan, a safe passage towards the coast, whence they said they purposed embarking for Mecca, for which as they said also they had obtained passports. As such pilgrims are in high respect, they were hospitably entertained, and preparations were being made for sending them on their way with presents, when their restitution was claimed by Sass, under a threat in case of refusal to waste the province with fire and sword: and within three days a strong force arrived. Yet the natives, anxious if possible to protect the refugees, had sent into Abazak to demand aid for

that purpose; but this aid, though promised, not having arrived in proper time, they found themselves unable alone to resist the Russians, and permitted them to carry back the refugees, who, it is said, were subsequently all sent to Siberia! This act of perfidy, as it is viewed here, caused the greatest indignation. A message of bitter reproach was sent by the Abazaks, and Dakhûm-okû, the spirited chief of Ubûkh, declared his determination to lead a force into Makhosh this winter, to ravage it, in punishment. An exception has even, I am told, been made in the administration of the oath in the south, by which, in consequence of this misdeed, the capturing of serfs in that province is permitted. The one I saw fettered at Khissa was a native of it.

Among the hapless seventy-two it is thought there were, as I said, some Poles; but they all performed their ablutions and said their prayers (in form at least) as faithful Mussulmans; and as their fate has strongly excited the sympathy of the people, it has become, like other striking events, the subject of a song, in which, among other things, it is deplored, that they had found the true path to salvation and were driven from it.

I have said that the conduct of those in Makhosh concerned in this affair is here viewed as perfidious; but it will be seen that this view is not just, because the people of that province, in making terms with Russia, had been required to pledge themselves to return those who deserted from her territory—everywhere objects of her greatest anxiety. Psesokhan has expressed himself ready to submit his conduct in this affair to trial.

Though not within the province of my journal, I feel tempted to make use of some other materials to give more truth to these sketches of Russian government, for the benefit of those who dream of that government becoming a means of civilising the East.

Potoski, whose book on the Caucasus, &c. is, I believe, little read in England, mentions his having paid a visit to the bishop of Mozdok and Madjar, who was by birth a Georgian; upon which Klaproth, whose evidence *against* Russia cannot be doubted, has given the following note: "The name of this bishop is Caïus—in Georgian *Gai*, he was of the family of Vakhakhachwili, to which belongs a portion of the town of Thelavi in Kakhethi. After having studied for twelve years in Russia, this learned monk returned to his country in 1780, and established at Thelavi a school, which had much success, and from which was expected a favourable influence on the state of civilisation in Georgia. *Malheureusement*, the founder was recalled in 1783 by the Russian government, which made him brilliant offers, *and his useful establishment ceased.* He remained two years at St. Petersburg without knowing why he had been cited there. In 1786 Prince Potemkin took him with him to Krementchoug, where he learned as little respecting his destination, and there remained till 1788, reduced almost to mendicity. The year following he accompanied the Archbishop of Yekaterinoslav to Yassy, for no other purpose but that of swelling the suite of this prelate. In 1792 he was again called to St. Petersburg, where he received some salary, but no employment. At length he was

sent as bishop to Mozdok, where Count Potoski found him."

This requires no comment; but another remarkable instance of the same sort may serve to show that the treatment of the philanthropic Caïus and his establishment is but part of a system of keeping the human herd blind, in order that it may be docile. Some fifteen years since, Nerses, an Armenian aratshnort (archbishop) — a person of equally extraordinary virtue, capacity, learning, enlightenment, and energy, and who gave promise of reforming the extremely vicious lives of the churchmen of his creed—established at Tiflis, and on a most magnificent scale for that capital, a university, in which he assembled masters for all the sciences, and for six or seven languages; had a printing-press constructed, and everything provided that could contribute to its efficiency. For four or five years the undertaking was carried on with equally good success and prospects, when, "*malheureusement,*" Marshal Paskevitch—who was there for objects of a nature totally different, and who, according to all accounts, has little respect for the "still and mental parts," and "counts wisdom as no member of war"—taking alarm at the aspect of the establishment, and at the great influence which the energy and integrity of Nerses' character had gained him among his countrymen, desired him to go to St. Petersburg and see the Emperor. Nerses went, but never returned, and his splendid university soon dwindled into a petty school. It is believed he was subsequently sent to Bessarabia! Requisitions for *soldiers* are begun among the Arme-

nians north of the Caucasus, probably among those to the south also.

These instances, to which might be added many others illustrative of the misrule of Russia—as, for example, the driving of thousands of Armenians, men, women, and children, within her Asiatic frontier, as the spoil of a triumph, after her last victories over the Turks; the transplantation of Armenians and Georgians from their native mountains to the insalubrious plains and steppe country north of the Caucasus; the removal into Georgia of thirty thousand Polish youths; a revolt attempted by the Georgian nobility in 1832, in consequence of which (though not known in Europe I believe) about thirty of them were sent to people Siberia; the shiftings of the Cossacks of the Don to the Dniester, and those of the Dniester to the Don; the slaughter of *twenty thousand* of them (*according to Klaproth*) on one occasion of insubordination; still greater slaughter in the Crimea, after the termination of the war, in order to secure the conquest; the compulsory return, by capturing their wives and children, of ten thousand Noghaïs, who had crossed the Kûban; the removal from that neighbourhood of these friendly Mussulmans, and placing in their stead the hostile Cossacks, Tshernomortsi—are sufficient evidence of "the uneasy feelings" caused among the various populations Russia has made herself mistress of, through the iron rule of *generalisation* she applies to all—of the agonies inflicted by her political Procrustes' bed — of the fearful process of assimilating digestion that takes place in the "dura ilia" of the gigantic hydra!

LETTER XXVII.

DISCIPLINE—"FRATER IN LOCO PARENTIS"—CIRCASSIAN "DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE OF DIVORCE"—THE CHEVALIER DE MARIGNY—CIRCASSIAN NOBLES—HARE-HUNTING—WINTER TEMPERATURE—MARRIAGE ETIQUETTE—COUNT POTOSKI—CIRCASSIAN NAMES OF THE KUBAN AND ELBRUZ—ETYMOLOGY—M. KLAPROTH—GEOLOGY—BELLI TETERRIMA CAUSA—GRATITUDE—ASSASSINATION—BIOGRAPHY OF SEFIR BEY—CIRCASSIAN MOURNING—PRINCELY TACITURNITY.

AGHSMUG, 11*th January*, 1839.

MY DEAR ——. I have just had a confluence of visiters, from whom, and from my host, who has just returned after an absence of several days among the *tamatas*, I learn that judicial proceedings against the spies and thieves are at length commenced. On the Khabl some of the hamlets of the malefactors have already been burned; and I am sorry to learn that one of them, whom I knew among the bravest warriors of that part of the country, has left it, in consequence of the proceedings against him, and gone to Temegui. The extent of what has to be done hereabouts may be judged of by what my host mentions,—that when he left the council yesterday at Vastoghaï, one hundred and forty-three persons had been sworn in—special constables, as we may call them—to remain under the orders of three of the

tamatas, and aid in the execution of such sentences as may be passed; the number of which it is expected will be great, both as regards thieves and traitors, by which name I mean to designate those who visit the Russians secretly, which many did on the late invasion, not, as is believed, for the purpose of betraying the country, but to curry favour, and prevent the destruction of their hamlets and effects. Such visits, and other species of treachery, are punished, according to their character, by a fine of from six up to two hundred oxen, the burning of the hamlet, and confiscation of the effects of the offender; or his being put to death, and the seizure and sale of his children, are the consequences of hardened contumacy. The children are disposed of by sale, lest they should cherish, and afterwards execute, vengeance on the father's account.

Sentence has been already passed in one case, and though just it appears harsh. One of the bravest warriors and most zealous patriots in the district of Vastoghaï is *Tshûpako* Zanûk, who chiefly planned and led in the storming of the redoubt near Anapa. Nine or ten years ago, his brother, then a boy, on being chastised by him fled to Anapa; was thence sent to St. Petersburg, and became in time an officer of the imperial guards. His mother having learnt, during the late campaign, that he was on the frontier, became desirous of seeing him, and prevailed on her neighbour Zepsh—some of whose valorous deeds I mentioned to you while residing at his hamlet—to contrive to bring her long-lost son to see her, which he effected. The elder brother has sworn that he

had no hand in the affair. The visit, moreover, was beneficial to those who saw the young noble, as he gave the strongest encouragement to continue the war; yet Zanûk and Zepsh have been condemned to pay each twenty-four oxen.

The conversation with my visiters, who were on their way to the judicial council, turned chiefly upon thieving, and the means I would recommend for its more speedy suppression; in regard to which Hasesh, the oldest of them, seemed to anticipate much difficulty at present, not so much through any danger of resistance—although he mentioned an instance of this which occurred long since, in his youth, when sixty persons (chiefly asserters merely of the right of thieving) were slain in one day, and everything they possessed confiscated—as, that it might be the means of their losing the aid of many of their bravest warriors! I counselled them to persevere, nevertheless, as the evil—a total bar as it is to the progressive improvement of the country—must, at all hazards, be eradicated; and that they should not despair on account of the difficulties they encountered, which were but the natural fruits of the centuries of tolerance and even of applause which the practice they now sought to suppress had enjoyed.

My host says that the tamatas expressed much satisfaction at seeing him, as it rendered unnecessary their detaching any of their number, as they were about to do, to inform me of the commencement of proceedings. They promised, when matters were more matured, that some of them should wait on me, and said that perhaps they might request my attend-

ance, in which case I shall tell you of anything notable that occurs.

I have had a curious illustration of the respect paid to the elder brother. Here are two brothers; the wife of the elder is somewhat of a shrew, and aspires to the management of everything and every person, even of her good-natured, tractable lord and master. She holds in her keeping the whole currency of the hamlet (saving that of the Tatar, whom she has not yet caught); viz. some 200 pieces of merchandise, and that so firmly, that the wife of the younger brother is barely decently clad; sleeps on a mat; and has but sheep's-skin covering of nights; while the other has more than one handsome dress "for superfluity," and mattresses and coverlets in the same proportion. Luca, who has a strong sense of justice (for the whole property in case of separation would fall to be equally divided between the brothers) reproached her for the state in which she left her sister-in-law, telling her (which he invented for the nonce) that I took her for a slave: but all to no purpose. He then reproached the younger brother on the same subject: who replied, "What would you have me do? Vardan is as my father, and it would be a shame for me to remonstrate with him; he sees our condition, and can better it or not as he thinks proper!" Yet this compliance is but a tithe of what this *filial* respect has extracted from him; for the present half-clothed one is his second wife, and the first, the mother of Miss Paak, he allowed to be sent back to her friends because she winced under the tyranny of the shrew! she was married

again soon after, and has sundry children in the neighbourhood. You may see from this that divorce is an easy matter. In fact, the only check upon it—where affection is wanting—is the loss of half the valuable consideration given for the fair one, in case she be sent away by the husband: if she go away of her own accord, and find reception with her family, even on account of the worst of treatment, they must either return her when demanded, or pay the whole or even much more than her marriage price. The former occurrence is not at all uncommon with captious men who are wealthy.

The elder brother in this hamlet generally takes his meals with my dragoman and those who eat after me, the younger one and the Russian slave serving; the remainder is then carried to the kitchen, where the two latter discuss it together—in like manner as they work in common. Such treatment of a slave from among the rancorous enemies of this country, may not be in unison with the usages of civilisation, according to the estimate of the classic Chevalier de Marigny et Boccacini; but it seems to accord with the simpler dictates of humanity. And here I am tempted to show what called forth this observation.

In the first edition of this gentleman's book he gives a speech (suppressed in the second) made to him by a noble he dined with at Ghelenjik, who, among many compliments and kind expressions addressed to him as a Frenchman, said of the Russians: "I have seen them at Anapa, at the Boghaz and at Yekaterinodar; but disdainful of us because they

were richer; despising our customs as much as we despised theirs; haughty, insolent to us within their walls, almost *as if we had been Tatars;* it was impossible for me to esteem them." To which apparently reasonable objections the Chevalier appends this uncivil observation: "It is to be remarked that this *savage* despised in the Russians only the usages which result from civilisation!" As the Circassians universally hold the Tatars in high regard, that phrase, "as if we had been Tatars," must, if it were used by the noble, have been intended to express the contempt he had seen these people treated with by the Russians; if inserted by our author, it must have been caused by what he had himself witnessed in this respect. In either case it tells equally against the converts to '*civilisation.*'

This writer may be depended on for what *he saw,* but his inferences are sometimes incorrect, and his information from others and general observations still more so. He represents the soil as generally uncultivated, though everywhere good, and a great portion of the country as covered with immense forests. In which respects I have to observe, that grain having been from long before his time the chief, and with the majority, almost the whole sustenance of the people, it is to be presumed that its cultivation has always been in proportion to their consumption; and it would have been useless to have made it greater, there having never been (except through Anapa) any considerable vent for the surplus: and as for the forests, that it would have been as idle to have cut them down, as in some localities they constitute one of the chief

military defences of the country; and their underwood affords the food on which goats—the chief live stock of the country—thrive best; to which end it is kept at a suitable growth where necessary.

Further on in his survey, M. de Marigny says, "The Circassians afford at present the astonishing spectacle of a *free* people which has always preserved itself in the primitive state of all societies, although surrounded by nations more *civilised*." If by civilisation he mean the centralising and combining of power and resources under one chief, by which means nations are enabled to build great cities; to construct navies and to organise permanent armies, it must be confessed that the Circassians have remained behind their neighbours; but their wisdom in so doing is so far justified by the very freedom thereby preserved, and still more by the independence, which is not a fortuitous result; for those who still enjoy it frequently remark with congratulation, "If, like some of our neighbours, we had devolved our power upon chiefs, they might have subjected us to Russia, like the Kabardans and Azras,"—and we may add the Georgians. If on the other hand he mean by civilisation, the improved happiness and well-being of the mass, I have yet to learn that in this respect the Circassians have, as compared in the aggregate with their surrounding neighbours, the Russians and their dependants—the Turkomans of Bokhara and its dependencies—the Georgians, the Persians, the Turks, anything whatever to regret in the adherence to their primitive institutions. Of all these populations the latter have had more fully developed among them "the greatest

happiness of the greatest number," (to avoid the *équivoque*, civilisation,) yet the Circassians have in this, the only valuable respect, nothing further that I know of to learn from them. The commerce which has improved the condition of the Turks and Russians came to them, as it would have come to the Circassians but for the impediments caused through the wars originated by Russia.

I have been told by old Sûbash that about two centuries ago there was a fierce struggle between the free men and the nobles of Circassia, and that the power of the latter, who were then much more numerous, and each sept of whom had a sept of thfokotls subject to it, was then first effectually broken. Mohammedism farther reduced it. Its renovation, and the reduction of all below to a servile equality, have been distinctly promised to individuals of that class by the Russians, in the event of their success. But although the liberty now enjoyed appears thus to have been wrenched from the hands of the nobles, there remains enough of respect and precedence allowed to those of that class to evince the forbearance and good-feeling of the rest; and the expression in common use among them for anything done genteelly is "vorkhi khabse," (*à la noble.*)

As these nobles are not, like those among our Celts, chiefs of a clan, but a distinct race, like those of England; and, like the generality of the latter, boast of a foreign extraction, Arabian or Crimean (especially the former), I think it probable that, in like manner, their ancestors were a dominant party of invaders, and that the "*vorkhi khabse*" may have

flowed from the same bright Saracenic source as the chivalrous gallantry of Europe. Bread and salt, the pledges of hospitality in Arabia, form here very often the first refreshment given to travellers.

On the 5th my host took me a hare-hunting, as there has been a fresh and knee-deep fall of snow, after the almost entire melting of the previous fall by only two days' thaw. We had no rifles or other arms; but Vardan provided himself on the way with a long stick, as I found others had done, who came after us on foot with two or three of the collie dogs I have formerly alluded to, but which were of as little service as the sticks or our horses; for the snow proved not so deep but that the hares we started easily distanced us by leaping. As there are few first-rate coursing-dogs, and the use of small-shot is unknown, it is not surprising that comparatively few hares, birds, and other small animals, are killed.

14*th*.—Mensûr has for some time been preparing to take his turn with Rayevski in getting a force mustered to cross the Kûban; but unless there come hereafter more favourable weather than has been, his expedition cannot take place this winter.

Last winter Fahrenheit's thermometer by this time had been 48° below freezing, and the first fortnight in January averaged $33\frac{4}{7}$ *minus*; while this year the lowest point has been 30° below freezing, and the first fortnight of the year averaged $32\frac{5}{7}$ *plus*.

The Russian army instead of wintering, as formerly, at Stavropol, has remained, it is said, at Tchernomor, near Yekaterinodar, in order to be at hand for an early return in spring.

Meanwhile, you must allow me, in order to sustain the patience so often called for here—in waiting, as at present, for the document to prove the necessity of my stay and for the Russian general's letter, both promised me almost a month ago—to occupy my weary leisure in a little more criticism; fearful though I be that my lucubrations may savour of the source they flow from. But I must first tell you, lest they escape my memory, some particulars about marriage etiquette, which have been narrated to me as preventing Mademoiselle Dissepli finishing my things. Some days since her brother brought home his spouse, having first got from me, as from other friends, a small present to give to the parents in earnest of full payment to be made for their daughter hereafter. To-day Miss Paak, like all the other young female friends of the family, married and unmarried, has gone charged with cakes and *bonbons* to pay her respects to the bride, who, until the marriage festival—generally ten days, a fortnight, or even a month after the carrying off—must not be seen out of her room, but remain seated there in state, to receive the congratulations of those female visiters: and as it is considered indecorous for her to be loquacious during this long interval, her sister-in-law, Miss Dissepli, must remain in attendance in her chamber to make suitable replies for her. During this interval also the unfortunate bridegroom is understood to have no communication with his fair one, and his visits to her (which are also only understood) must be paid under cloud of night. He is even an exile from the society of his parents until the marriage festival, when he

presents them with a bullock, sheep, or goat, for the repast; kisses their hands, and obtains permission to visit his wife, which, however, must still be done at night only. On the birth of the first son, and often of those following, the festival is repeated; but never, I grieve to say, on the birth of daughters. For years the young husband must not be seen with his children, or even address his parents while the children are with them. All this is the etiquette for all classes; but the latter portions of it are strictly observed in general by the *vork* and *pshe* only. It is they also who adhere generally, though not universally, to the practice of placing their children (males especially) immediately, or soon after birth, each separately in the care of an *atalik*, for eight, ten, or twelve years. This is done also by some of the wealthier and more influential *thfokotls;* while the rest, although by this means they might save expense for a time at least—for the atalik finds the child in everything—prefer retaining their young folks at home till they be serviceable. Formerly, as Potoski says, the *atalik* was subject to having his ears cut on the death of his *pkhûr* or *élève*; but this usage has long since and entirely ceased.

It was Voltaire, I think, who said—and if so, he of all others had least right to say it—"I distrust every one who piques himself on wit." This, in a traveller at all events, is a dangerous failing, and Potoski seems to me to show strong symptoms of it. For instance, in one chapter he represents the balance of power in the Caucasus as embarrassed with as many various interests as that of Europe at the period of

the treaty of Westphalia, and these interests as still more versatile, &c. "Mais il n'en est pas moins vrai que tout cela est soumis *à un véritable droit public*, et qu'il n'y manque que des Grotius et des Puffendorf pour mettre en œuvre d'aussi beaux matériaux." Yet in a subsequent chapter, after alluding to the *dafez*, or general assemblies, (which he calls *pok*,) he says:—"But these never take place, unless Russia has some proposition to make; because for the interior the true constitution is positively what is called in Germany 'Faust-recht,' (le droit du poing)." * A writer who thus plays at "fast and loose" with what he should carefully weigh and faithfully describe, deserves to be distrusted for his own contradictions alone; but I have other evidence against him; viz. that of respectable old men, who knew the Kabardans intimately and personally both before and after Potoski's transient visit to their frontier, and among whom are Shamuz and others of the most fearless veracity and quickest observation. Shamuz, for twelve years about that period, used to go annually to that province to take part in the warlike exploits against the Russians. On their evidence, carefully elicited, I am enabled to deny that "Faust-recht" (according to Potoski's meaning) was ever, within the memory of man, the constitution of the country, or even prevailed in it to any extent; that

* It might have been supposed that the Count, in using the phrase *Faust-recht*, had alluded to the *legal* form of process of the German empire, which was analogous to the *posse comitatus* of the Circassian fraternities; but his having explained his meaning by the French phrase precludes this supposition.

either the princes of Kabarda, or those of any other province, shifted the locality of their villages or hamlets (as Potoski states) every four or five years, or indeed at all, in general, on account of feuds with their neighbours, the formation of new alliances, or from any other cause; that the "Abazes" (Abazaks) ever appealed to the Russians for protection against the princes of Kabarda, or to be transferred to another territory, for that or any other reason; and that the people of Shapsuk, or of any other province, ever permitted their children to be sold to Armenians or to any one trading to Russia; consequently the twenty of both sexes the Count saw in the possession of an Armenian, who pretended to have purchased them on this side of the Kûban, must have been kidnapped or captured by the Russians—practices still in constant use among them. Potoski says, by the way, that among these Circassian slaves was a young man from the head of the Laba, a subject of "Bezlenie" (Besni, which is inhabited by genuine Circassians); that his language resembled that of the Alte-Kessek, (also Circassians,) yet no one understood it, or knew his nation! But it is little wonder that the amiable Count transcribed fables, seeing that he drew his information from Armenians (universally on this side of the Caucasus in the interest of Russia, from whose trade their wealth is derived), as his hosts at Kisliar; from treacherous natives, as those who are friendly with the Russians have ever been held; and from Russian officers, who, seeing that he was a writer, and, as their system has ever been uniform, must have glossed their statements, in the hope that they would thus pass to the European public.

As these observations apply with equal force to every other writer on this country, nothing but what they saw should be received as evidence in regard to its inhabitants.

Lest any of our countrymen should hereafter come to travel here from curiosity, it might be well they should know the common appellation of two objects of prime interest—the largest river and the highest mountain; the names of which in use among us—Kûban and Elbrûz—as obtained from the Turks, Noghaïs and others of these races, are not even known to many here. The Circassian name of the former is "Pshiz," and of the latter "Noghaï Hûskha," or "the mountain of the Noghaïs," which seems to imply that this people formerly possessed that portion of the country. Let them remember also that Tcherkèss (which Klaproth says means "*coupeur du chemin ou brigand,*" although I have not been able to meet with any one who knows of such an etymology) is also a Turkish name; that given by the people themselves to the whole race from the eastern limit of Great Kabarda to the district on the coast called Vardan, being "Adighé." Another appellation, though not in such common use, is "Agûjipse:" what distinction there may be, if any, between the two, I have not yet been able to discover. I believe the latter term to be applied to those who speak a dialect of the language of the Adighé. This word Agûjipse, brings to my mind our moon-dropped gipsies; but I leave to others to trace them to the Caucasus, or both to the Nile; and to find also from whom was borrowed the Circassian appellation of the

Supreme Being, *Ta*—("*Ta shkho*"—the great God). That in use among the Mitsjeghis, a great race in the mountains to the south-east—*Da* or *Daël* seems to be —an alteration of the same word, or *vice versa. Khoda* is the Persian term, but it seems far to fetch the other thence, especially as the one is but the terminal syllable of the other, instead of the initiatory one—much less liable to amputation—used by ourselves, the Germans, and others. The most probable derivation, after all, appears to be from the same root as *Taût*, which, according to Pallas, among the worshippers of fire in the vicinity of Bakû, to this day signifies God. The preservation, by the way, of this term God—one of the many proofs of the Eastern derivation of the Teutonic languages—seems to afford strong proof that the Teutons *, amid all the wanderings of themselves, and their theology, had ever retained recollection, at least, of that Supreme Being adored by their fathers in the East; otherwise upon the promulgation of Christianity among them, how should the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin terms, so dissimilar from this one, have come to be rendered by it? I may have been forestalled in this observation, but that, at all events, is more than I know.

But I find I have inadvertently mounted my hobby; permit me, however, to say, in alighting, that I have found here a similar tradition with that mentioned by Potoski—that the Lesghis (here called Kokhan) came originally from Affghanistan. Klap-

* Quere if this word may not originally have been Taûtons, and used as designating their worship?

roth says this is a fable, originating with the Armenians, from the difficulty they have in pronouncing the *l* in the word *Alban*, which, at all events, is a fable, for no such difficulty exists *.

It may be of further interest to future travellers to know that in the Bakhan, near this, after freshets, considerable lumps of native sulphur have been found, (one about a foot in diameter); and that further to the north-east, on the verge of the plain of the Adughûm, is a circular mound, with a hollow in the apex, on which pumice-stone has been found, as I have seen.

17*th*.—For the twenty-four hours previous to last evening we had a heavy gale of wind from the south-east, accompanied throughout by torrents of rain, which, streaming from the hill above, made (as has happened before) a mine under the wall by the head of my divan, and a thoroughfare across the floor; obliging a young nobleman, who slept there, as lads generally do, with nothing beneath him but a mat, to quit his bed-place for the fire-side.

"When we made war upon Psadûg, all the Agûjipsi aided us," said the father of this lad—a Tshûpako of whom I had asked the meaning of that term, and who explained that by this he meant the inhabitants of Notwhatsh, Shapsuk, and Abazak, as distinguished by some peculiarities of language from the rest of the Adighé who dwell to the eastward of the frontier of Shapsuk.

* M. Klaproth may have got this idea from the Turks, who have an *occasional* and quite peculiar pronunciation of the L, which is very difficult for others to acquire.

And now, having awakened your interest as to this war upon Psadûg, by plunging at once "*in medias res*," in the true Homeric style, I shall proceed, in conformity with its rules, to relate its cause—again a fugitive fair one! Some fifteen years ago, on the death of a Tshûpako, his widow, of a noble family in Psadûg, obtained permission from his family to go there and see her own; but instead of returning, according to her duty, to surrender her person to those with whose wealth it had been purchased, she remained in her native province, and married without permission or any contract being made for her value. She was consequently claimed by the Tshûpakos, as the property of a family of their sept; and the claim not having been listened to, and all satisfaction withheld, they called upon their friends among the Agûjipsi to aid them in revenging the insult. The cry was echoed throughout all these hills and valleys; re-echoed in the remote ones of Abazak, and responded to by some four or five thousand warriors, who assembled on the plain towards the Kûban, and under the conduct of Kehri-kû and Kalabat-okû, two experienced Tshûpakos, proceeded towards the offending province. Its inhabitants, no less on the alert, had called on the Adighes to the eastward to assist them in withstanding the storm; but these upon understanding the nature of the cause, and finding the Psadûgans so unreasonable as to refuse to submit it to trial in legal form, abandoned them to their fate, which had its fulfilment in the destruction of some hamlets, and the slaughter, among a few others, of one of their princes. The offenders then consented to submit the

matter to trial; but it stood over till the Russian war broke out after the fall of Anapa, and this war has ever since too much engaged public attention to admit of its being resumed. The blood of a prince gave, of course, a much deeper dye to the feud; but revenge in kind is no longer sought, and although the parties principally concerned abstain from entering each other's provinces, the others have long since done so on a friendly footing; and the whole it is said will be arranged *à l'amiable*, that is, according to law, on the first cessation of the Russian war.

You will, no doubt, prefer the litigious quills of Doctors' Commons, to such use of the hostile swords of thousands; but at all events this affair cannot be held as an instance of "Faust-recht" in the sense of Potoski; for *might* was on the side of *right*, and made the law of the land, such as it is, to be respected.

18*th*.—To say only that the kindness and gratitude of the people for my stay among them are great, is to show little of the latter quality myself, in thus leaving their feelings but vaguely described, instead of giving instances of their exhibition, which, like points in the thermometer, serve to indicate precisely the degree of warmth spoken of. A man of the poorer class called on my host the other day, for the sole purpose, as he said, of expressing to him his deep sense of the gratitude due to him for having accommodated me in his hamlet so long. After having done this, he endeavoured at great length to explain to him, from what he had heard, the great sacrifice of comfort such a person as I made in living among them, and the

necessity thence arising for everything possible being done to contribute to my ease. Upon this being reported to me by my dragoman, who was present, it occurred to me as being but preliminary to a visit to curry favour, and perhaps to demand something. I was agreeably disappointed, however, by the man having departed without even having come to look at him he had pleaded for. Miss Dissepli has just afforded further proof of the same feeling. A person who serves me here went with some cloth for her to dye for me, and found her in the greatest distress, shedding floods of tears, and protesting she had been unable to do anything for some days, in consequence of some one having said I was very angry with her for having neglected my work and plundered me of silver lace; which she declared, with fresh floods of tears, she was incapable of doing, as her only motives in undertaking my work, were to show her share in the general gratitude, and to gain her the distinction of having worked for such a person! I sent my dragoman immediately to console her, and to disprove the allegations of her *kind* friend, whose name, however, she refused to give. These instances from the depth of this society please me more than what appears on its surface.

19*th.*—On the 13th I was alarmed at hearing of two Circassians having been found assassinated in a forest in the valley of Semez—secret murder having appeared a crime of which the Circassians were entirely innocent. Their throats had been cut, and their weapons carried off; and the report was, that they had been hunting towards Doba, and were sup-

posed to have met with and captured some Russian deserters, who had murdered and robbed them while they took a nap from fatigue. The arms I hoped might lead to a discovery of the delinquents, and so it has fallen out; for, soon after, three Russian deserters, in possession of them, were caught making their way towards Anapa; who upon being charged with the crime, alleged (at least two of them) that they had been forced to do it in self-defence, as the Circassians had wished to force them back to Doba and sell them to their officers. But their statements were not believed, especially as one of them had previously given frightful proof of his infamy and appetite for murder. I think I wrote you about him before, as being free, married and doing well for himself, in a hamlet at Semez, where he had resided for some years. In the same hamlet—that of Hûssein the merchant, a most kind and inoffensive person—resided the handsome young widow and three children of a Turkish merchant who was wrecked and lost his life lately on the coast. She was well left in goods; but one night last summer this monster of ingratitude towards people who had adopted him as one of themselves, contrived to gain admittance to her cot; murdered her and two of her children (fortunately the other slept that night at a neighbour's), and having loaded her and his own goods upon horses, decamped with his wife, children, and plunder, to Doba. One of these deserters, a young lad, denied all participation in the murder of the two Circassians, and was acquitted; but of the other two the people determined to make a striking example, in order to intimidate

the numerous Russians who live among them; they were therefore tied to a tree and sabred!

Last year, during a journey, I heard a report of a young woman being *supposed* to have been strangled by her mother and sister-in-law; but the only authenticated instance I have heard of *secret* murder among the Circassians, was through the confession of a man in this neighbourhood, who, on taking the national oath—which as I have told you includes confession of all the crimes one has perpetrated or been privy to—confessed, that about fifteen years previously, he had seen such a murder committed by some persons from Psadûg.

Zepsh, who, as I have said, was condemned in a fine of twenty-four oxen, for having brought a young Russian officer to see his mother, has had the fine remitted at the instance of his guest, the wife of Sefir Bey, to whom the fine has been as it were presented by the congress. This is as it should be.

Speaking of Sefir Bey, I may here relate some particulars I have learned of his eventful history. His family Zahn-okû; those of Haïtek-okû in Temegui (Jambolet, the chief of which was slain lately by the Russians), and of Halash-okû near Sûkûm-kaleh, are of the same princely stock (forming the sept or fraternity Bûlatûk)—held to be one of the most ancient and princely in all Circassia*. But his mother was merely noble, and his brother (not his

* Two copies of a manuscript history of this princely sept are said to be extant—one in the possession of Sefir Bey; and the other in the family of the Temegui branch. This manuscript may be somewhat of a literary curiosity: I hope to get a transcript of it.

uncle, as I said formerly)—the son of another wife, a princess—resolved, as is supposed, to stop this contamination of the stream of their lineage by selling Sefir as a slave. This was told the latter, then a mere boy, and that the person who purposed purchasing him was in conference with his brother, upon hearing which he mounted the man's horse, and fled to the protection of a noble in the neighbourhood. This person, either for safety, or for education not to be had here, placed him with the Russian commandant of Anapa. But the young prince disliking being cooped up within such narrow limits, or very possibly the lessons in treason to the Mussulman interest essayed with him, quitted one night his quarters with the commandant, (not empty-handed, as is said,) and letting himself down by a rope attached to the battlements, escaped again to the protection of his noble friend. Subsequently he set sail for Egypt to join the Memlûks, with whom he remained, sharing in all the fierce warfare amid which their power was broken up. He then returned to his native country; married a Noghaï princess, and Anapa being again in the possession of the Turks, he entered the service of its Pasha, under whom he became second in command. He was thus employed at the time of its last siege; and if his courageous example had been followed, and his counsel had not been withstood by his treacherous superior, the assault would in all probability have failed. Of his subsequent progress through the provinces, with other chiefs and persons of influence, to obtain their nomination of him as ambassador for procuring foreign aid, and their

engagement not to surrender to Russia, I have already informed you. The first application for aid made by him and Judge Mehmet, his associate, was addressed to the Sultan, and having proved ineffectual (though the answer is said to have given future hope) they next proceeded, like profound politicians, to Mehmet Ali.

One of the members of the fraternity of Sefir Bey, in Temegui, having lately died, occasion has thus been given to mention to me the nature of the mourning required for such individuals. He who participates in it must descend from his horse at such a distance from the hamlet, that his lamentations can there be heard; and as he approaches it uttering them aloud, and clad in nothing save tattered coat and trousers, unbonneted and barefoot, and rolling himself from time to time on the ground, in proof of the fervour of his affliction, persons from the family come and pour water on his head, to cool the fever of his grief! In other respects the funeral rites of princes are similar to those of others.

In the "palmy" days of these princes, it was customary for them to travel with a great retinue of nobles and others. Certain classes of the nobles only had the privilege of eating with them; and some one of noble rank was always in attendance, when company was received, to entertain the guests, it being considered indecorous in a prince to be talkative.

LETTER XXVIII.

A JUDICIAL ASSEMBLY—THE "CODE CIRCASSIEN"—MORE LAWYERS ATTRACTED BY BRISK BUSINESS—FOREIGN TRADE OF THE CIRCASSIANS—NAVRUZ IN JEOPARDY—A ROMAN SPIRIT—SEPULCHRAL MONUMENT—ATROCITIES OF SASS—THE RUSSIANS IN GREAT KABARDA—POLITICS OF THE CAUCASUS—TRIAL OF TSHURUK-OKU TUGHUZ FOR TREASON.

PSEGAHE, 28*th January*, 1839.

MY DEAR ——. Having by special invitation been now for some days in the immediate vicinity of the judicial assembly, I have gained some idea of the nature of its proceedings. Their object at first was a double one—the suppression of the national practice of theft, and of treacherous dealing or other communication with the enemy. But the latter being now the most important affair, it alone is to be prosecuted at present, in order that all the delinquents—supposed to be very numerous—may be dealt with before the commencement of a new campaign. So far as I have yet seen, there appears to be no ground for complaint of "the law's delay," at any rate.

Immediately on arriving in a district where criminals are reported to be, the *tamatas* and others assemble in some central locality which affords partial shelter from the wind then prevailing; and whether it have been one from northward bearing frost and snow, or from the opposite quarter with torrents

of rain, the proceedings of these hardy lawyers of the hills have gone on uninterruptedly. If the ground be in fit condition, the elders seat themselves upon it with a little straw; if otherwise, they stand in a circle, while those especially engaged to co-operate (whose muster-roll is a notched staff, and none of whom dare quit the vicinity of the *wittenagemote*, or field of justice; without the special permission of the three presidents) remain around on horseback, or as their fancy may lead them, listening at times to what is going forward, or practising their steeds, ready to be dispatched to bring by force before the elders any person reported criminal, and who may refuse to attend. On the appearance of one of the latter, if his confession agree with the information against him, he is at once adjudged to pay the fine attached to his offence; and payment being exacted immediately on condemnation, the most difficult duty of the judges appears to be that of valuing the articles—horses, arms, armour, merchandise, &c., taken in lieu of the number of oxen one is liable to pay; viz. six (or three hundred piastres), if he prove by witnesses or his oath that he visited a Russian fort solely for the purpose of purchasing salt; twenty-four, if it be proved that he held communication for other purposes with the enemy; but, if he have previously taken the national oath against such practices, and it be proved he has broken it for any purpose, he may be held to have forfeited his life, which he or his fraternity must redeem by the payment of 200 oxen or their value: such extremity is not, however, resorted to excepting after repeated transgressions.

The same fine falls to be paid by any one whose examination disagrees with the report against him; and who, upon being put to his oath, can be proved by the oaths of *two* or more witnesses, to have forsworn himself. For the purpose of having the oath administered, the Koran is appended to two rifle-rests, hard by the circle of elders, and he who has to be sworn goes there apart, with three or four of them, in whose presence he makes his declaration, taking the Koran in his hand and saying, "This is the book of God, and I declare," &c. I may explain that the oaths of two witnesses are necessary to condemn an accused, because the oath of the latter is taken; and if its testimony disagree with that of but one witness, the one is held to have counterbalanced the other, and judgment cannot then be pronounced but by the convention of the judicial elders of *eight* fraternities. But if even they pass sentence of death upon an individual, his fraternity—if it still think him undeserving of such extremity—has the power of redemption, by the payment of two hundred oxen. I may further explain that in each fraternity a certain number of the *tamatas* or elders (according to the amount of the fraternity) are selected by their fellows on account of their integrity, wisdom, and experience, and solemnly sworn to administer justice according to conscience, without regard of persons, and without acceptance of fee to pervert it. These elders are denominated *tarko-khass*—that is, sworn to justice.

In the judicial and other assemblies any one present is at liberty to speak, but few who are not *tarko-khass* (or at least elders) are much attended to; and

the latter, after the evidence in a trial has been publicly given and debated upon, go apart and decide upon the judgment, when they return and publicly communicate it through him who has been appointed president.

During the present circuit for the punishment of treason, it has so happened that many of those accused have been found to have absented themselves. In such a case, the house of the accused would be burned unless some friend became guarantee for his production on his return home.

In cases of theft, the criminal is ordinarily tried by the judicial elders of his own fraternity and that of the person robbed; but the latter, if a judicial congress be assembled, has his choice of carrying his case before it. In the former case, the fine (which is to the value of seven oxen, in addition to restitution of the value of the article stolen, or twenty-four oxen if the crime be a second one) falls to be divided among the judicial elders of the two societies; in the latter, these fines go into the general account of the judicial elders and their assistants. In the case of a hardened malefactor, he is dealt by as in the case of extreme treachery; that is, he is either—besides condemnation on his last offence—adjudged and put to death by his own fraternity (which is the usual mode), or condemned to it by the judges of eight other societies, leaving the power of redemption to his own.

This administration of justice presents other singular features; for instance, the great assemblage of force; viz., four to five hundred men brought to-

gether, to such an amount, for no end that I can perceive, except that of proving, that what is done is not the work of a party, but of the sovereign majority; and this force is not stationary—except those numbered on the muster-staff—but forms as it were a floating barrier around the tribunal; for the heads of families, of whom, with their attendants, it is chiefly composed, may absent themselves temporarily, if they please, and many for a time go home on their own affairs, or elsewhere for other purposes. Thus my host, Vardan, and some others, pending the present proceedings, made an excursion to the sea-side, between the fortresses of Anapa and Jamatia, where one of them was fortunate enough to capture two Cossacks, their horses, arms, and the post-bag they were charged with, containing some fifty letters from Russia, for which only these faithful messengers pleaded earnestly, protesting that they cared not what became of themselves, if the letters were but forwarded in safety to their destination, which of course was not complied with. One of the letters was given me. It is a military one, and its number, 30,870, proves what I have before observed—the immense multiplicity of such documents.

Another of these singular features is, that the remuneration of the judges and of the whole *posse comitatus*, accruing from a division among them of the fines they impose, the amount of the one necessarily depends upon that of the other; which, it might be supposed, would lead to unnecessary severity, from mere self-interest. What I have al-

ready mentioned of Zepsh's fine having been remitted, tends to prove the contrary; which is further proved by the same leniency having been shown to one, of my late hosts and to some others, upon their taking oath that the salt used in their families had been purchased by order of their wives, and entirely without their knowledge. Nay, I have even heard of instances of the oath being administered a second time to individuals who were pretty well known to have broken it the first. The host now mentioned had to feed and lodge in his hamlet, during the night I spent there, some twelve individuals including myself and attendants. My host here has in like manner had seventeen, and all the householders are similarly inconvenienced. This is like quartering a detachment of troops upon an offending district, and may thus be productive of some good. It is, indeed, a means sometimes resorted to, to force on the discovery of thieves; the members of congress continuing to live at free quarters in the accused neighbourhood, sometimes for several months—though not continuously—until such discovery be made. But the innocent are thus punished along with the guilty, and many of the former have complained loudly of such hardship. This complaint I feel disposed to re-echo, and I have consequently expressed my disinclination to augment the grievance by remaining longer (in company of the congress) than is absolutely necessary for the discussion of the affairs I was brought here about. I am not without hope that by further harping upon this (timeous) chord, I may lead the chiefs to the construction of a permanent

tribunal, according to a modification of their own institutions that I have suggested, which may serve eventually for some form of fixed or permanent government (so necessary for foreign relations, and prompt administration in warfare)—the object my countrymen and I have long striven to effect.

While now upon law affairs I may communicate some further information connected with them which I have obtained of late, and although there may be some repetition of what I formerly stated, I think it will be excused in matters of such interest. The price of blood was formerly calculated, according to ancient usage, at so many "head;" a slave, a good horse, a good shirt of mail, a good bow, sixty sheep, and so forth, being each accounted "a head." A hundred of these "heads" formed the price of the blood of a *pshe*, or prince (that of the descendant of a sultan was indefinite);* thirty that of a *vork*, or noble; twenty that of a *thfoktl*, or freeman; and fifteen that of a *pshilt*, or serf. Subsequently the freemen raised the price of their blood to twenty-eight "heads"; and then at the suggestion of Hassan Pasha (as I have formerly said) the prices of the blood of the three first classes were equalised and fixed at two hundred oxen, which are considered to amount in value to about as much as the thirty "heads" which previously formed the price of the blood of a noble. But, in regard to the serf, religion has not succeeded in supplanting deep-rooted usage, the price of his blood having been left as formerly, at half that of the noble. I cannot find, moreover, that any provision has been made against a freeman killing his own serf. Those whom

I have conversed with on the subject, appeared to think such a law as superfluous as one to prevent a man burning his own house, and they declare they cannot remember of such a murder having been committed.

The "heads" now mentioned were not however all of one value, but varied—according to the class of the person whose blood had to be paid for—from the value of sixty to eighty oxen in the case of a prince, down to eight in the case of a freeman; and among the "heads" in the former case, it was specially required, that there should be sixteen young serfs of so many—say six spans in height. Among the "heads" of the other two classes there was also great variation in value according to the class, and some even in it of much more, and others of much less value. These perplexed "heads" are still here in use, with like variation, in purchasing the brides of the different classes, leaving much scope for treaty in the settlement of marriage; the difference not lying in the number of "heads," which is fixed for each grade; but in the proportion of "heads," of three classes of value for each of the three grades, which he who has to receive may stipulate for. Their numbers are fifty to sixty for the bride of a prince, thirty for that of a noble, and twenty-five for that of a freeman. The wife of a serf is bought for him by his master at prices varying, according to youth, beauty, and accomplishments, from sixty to eighty oxen in value; sometimes more. But if the serf have carried off his bride without previous bargain, much more is demanded; and in such a case I have known the

value of a hundred and ten oxen paid for a handsome girl. Such carrying off often nearly doubles the price of brides of the free grades also. The prince here formerly enjoyed the privilege (or rather tribute of respect) of having the price of his bride made up in great part by presents from his dependants—each according to his means—and of having presented to him by each of the latter, who had a daughter married, one of the "heads" which he received in payment for her. But he also, upon the marriage of any one of them, was equally bound by usage to aid him in making up the price of his bride by a present. Such privileges for princes have been abrogated with many others, in those three democratic provinces; though they are still held bound by ancient usage to give some present to those who come from a distance to see them; but in the provinces eastward of Shapsuk I am led to believe that these privileges still in some degree prevail, excepting the graduated payment by "heads" for the price of blood, which as far as the remote Kûmûks has been supplanted by the standard of 200 oxen in value for all grades excepting serfs. This fine forms the protection of a stranger also, his *bizim* or protector being bound to demand payment of it in the event of his being slain.

It were frightful to suppose that in any portion of human society it had been deliberately determined on that one man might kill another upon the condition of his paying so much for the gratification of his passion, whatever it might be. But I do not consider this the just light in which this institution

of payment for blood should be viewed; for it does not indeed appear to have been a primary institution upon the formation of Circassian society, but an expedient latterly resorted to to prevent the protraction of feuds, and the consequent farther effusion of blood for blood; and in corroboration of this view, I have to state that much more of these judicial settlements occur now—for the purpose of preventing disunion—than formerly, and that a large proportion of them is for crimes of old date, so remote as even fifteen to twenty years. It is also to be remarked, that they are almost all of the class we denominate homicide—that is murder committed in hot blood, occasioned by a quarrel. Some, however, are of a different nature, as, for instance, the murder of the noble on the coast by the man I saw at Sûbesh, by whom he was shot on his approach to apprehend him for repeated theft, and who had guaranteed him when formerly condemned for the same crime. All the property of that criminal was seized; but he escaped, and found protection, as you may recollect, from the member of another fraternity, with which he must remain, as his own fraternity had condemned him, and he has no means of his own for payment of the price of blood, provided it shall be accepted; for you must also recollect that it is in the option of the relatives of the person murdered to refuse, as is sometimes done, any substituted compensation for their right of blood for blood. It would be well for the country if there were a supreme tribunal to establish distinction between the species of murder; to abolish the affording a sanctuary, at least in such

a case as the one now mentioned, and to bring such a criminal to condign punishment. Such however as the law here is, it is practically the same for all, which is not by any means the case in any of the great neighbouring states—Russia, Persia, or Turkey.

A day or two have been consumed by the congress in a debate highly characteristic. It having become known in Shapsuk that the eagles of these parts were gathered together, a large flight from that quarter came here to swell the force, and share the prey. The chief judge Mehmet seemed among the most annoyed at this exhibition of zeal, and the prospect it afforded of diminution of profits; and the number of these auxiliaries continuing to increase until it had reached about fifty (persons of chief influence), produced at length a remonstrance from my friends here (particularly the judge), who told these "wise men of the East" that there was here abundance of good men to control the bad ones; that there was much greater occasion for their services among their own people, and that each party had better employ itself in its own province, unless its aid beyond it were called for. The debate (with a little intermediacy from me) ended in an amicable acquiescence in these propositions, and the Shapsukans agreed to relieve the overburdened hamlets of their presence. But before departing, they told their brethren here that they heard that some letters I wanted had not yet been given me, which they requested might be immediately done; charging them further, as they wished for continuance of their friendship, to comply with every wish I expressed, and declaring their

readiness to contribute in anything that might be wanted for me.

With the exception of judge Mehmet, who though a senior, a clever person and fortified with a firman from the sultan for his chief judgeship, enjoys but little influence, on account of the intemperance of his disposition, all the judges or *tarko-khass* I have spoken of, are none other, as shown above, than those among the seniors whose integrity of conduct and capacity for the management of affairs have gained them influence among their countrymen. It is they, heads as they are, in like manner, of large septs, or association of septs, who constitute the government of the country as well as the tribunals of its justice; and they serve it on general occasions, for no other remuneration than that of honour, excepting in the case of these trials, where their share of the fines is but so much more as the good-will of the rest accords them. The law administered in general is of two species; that of ancient Circassian usage, and Turkish law, a volume of which Mehmet carries about with him (as do the other judges), and by an index finds out the penalty attached to each description of offence. As to the former, these open congresses of the seniors form, for the rest, so many normal schools (much rather of equity than of law), in which those who are so disposed may easily acquire a competent knowledge of the simple institutions of their country.

Others exulting in the grandeur of their codes may "hear with a disdainful smile the short and simple annals of" such legislation and government. But

let them look to the results, and they may find that good and evil are more equally diffused throughout all societies than is at first apparent, or "dreamed of in their philosophy;" that written law, though it may give individuals a more defined idea of their rights (often merely ideal), instead of crushing, frequently stimulates the invention of the evil-disposed, who knowing thereby the positions taken up by justice, and the statutes and precedents by which in many cases she is hemmed in and oppressed, find means to evade her; and in regard to government, that a comparison between the democracy of "civilised" America, for instance, and that of Circassia, will afford this remarkable contrast, that in the former the infinitely more complete organization receives its impulse almost immediately from the feelings and passions of the multitude, which thus form the governing principle; while here the feelings and passions of the multitude are held in entire control by the experience and wisdom of the community, as these exist among the elders, in whom alone, by imperative usage, is vested the right of debate and decision upon all matters of general interest. The ruling machine may thus be slow of motion and encumbered with prejudice; but there are evils of greater magnitude than these, and in every case we have but a choice. I do not mean to insinuate that the Americans do not—for I believe they do—elect their wisest and best men for governors and representatives; but they control and pledge them infinitely too much. Here also none but the best and wisest acquire any power and influence, but they are entirely

uncontrolled, save by the general sense of right and wrong—everywhere much the same. The jealousy of liberty requires, however, that every public concern should be publicly discussed.

In regard to trade, both the Turks who come here, and the Circassians among themselves, are greatly in the habit of tempting purchasers, by credit even to the extent of a year or more in some cases; interest of money being a thing entirely unknown, as may be supposed, in a country where money itself is almost equally so, and where the great amount of profit has hitherto made its introduction less necessary. Disputes by this means, of course, arise, in which case the oath is never allowed to be taken by the seller; but it is administered to the buyer, or to one witness, on the part of the former: if he have two, however, their simple asseveration is held sufficient to constitute the debt. Time is again given for its payment, but force is sometimes, though very rarely, used in compulsion, and consists in the creditor getting authority and aid from the *tarko-khass* of the fraternities of both parties concerned, to seize so much of the property of the recusant. The Circassians have not yet attained the refinement of seizing the person of a ruined man, and their cautious regard for the liberty of the subject is shown by the extremity of punishment not being resorted to—as in cases of theft and treason—till the oath to observe laws previously well known has been taken.

If any other matters of general interest occur during the assemblage of the judicial congress, they are then debated and decided on by it.

Aghsmûg, 1*st February*.—The object of the *tamatas*, in inviting me to attend the congress, seemed to be either to give some additional authority to their proceedings—for the judge, without any authority from me, had told the people that I was not to be considered as a merchant, like the Turks who came among them, but as a sort of minister sent to observe and give an account of them—or to keep me from impatience by having me travel about with them and live, like themselves, at the expense of others. But after having remained a week in their company—sometimes in good quarters, and sometimes in very bad, always however well fed—and having held two long conferences with a deputation of them, upon the progress of the administrative measures I had recommended (which was perfectly satisfactory), and with regard to the letters I thought should be despatched, and which the judge was directed by them to prepare forthwith; I communicated to them my intention to return here, as I found the hamlets quite enough burthened without me and my attendants.

On ascending the hills from the vale of Anapa we encountered a violent gale of wind from the southward, which soon brought torrents of rain which lasted all night and the greater part of the following day, making me anticipate that the Bakhan which lay in our way, (and which like the Sûbesh in the south may be named "the river of blood," having frequently engulfed those who were rash enough to cross it "in its lunes,") might be unfordable. I

therefore told Navrûz, our conductor, as we descended towards it, that I made no point of being home that evening, and that, if he attempted the ford and found he had to swim, I should certainly not follow him. In spite of this he thrice did so, although the plunging of his horse upon the two first attempts, showed that the usual bed of the ford had been carried away by the muddy torrent. On the third, he and his horse were swept into the main current of the stream; and as I sprang forward involuntarily with mine, fearing to see them carried into some fatal rapids close below, his active steed regained the side, against which he clung, swimming and snorting most piteously, as if aware of all the danger that still awaited him; for his master I had caught by the cloak, and while with one hand thus engaged, and another holding my horse, I thought for a moment what was next to be done—for our two young companions stood aloof, as if their part was to act as spectators—Navrûz adroitly threw himself on his side on the bank, and thus was enabled to scramble out. As for his lively steed, after both our efforts to haul him ashore had proved ineffectual, he cast him adrift, but inadroitly, for he turned his head up the stream, by which means the turn the poor animal had to make brought him close upon the rapids, the draught towards which seemed to nerve him with desperation, which saved him, when that seemed impossible.

Navrûz afterwards owned he felt himself in considerable danger, yet not a symptom of fear escaped

him, and would not I believe even in the last extremity, for no little spice of pride, as well as courage, forms an ingredient in the excellent compound of his character, and an exclamation of dread is here indelible disgrace. Besides, this was but one of about a score of times he had been in similar predicaments, as all must, more or less, who travel much in this bridge-less country. I should have much regretted his loss, as he is one of the most intellectual persons I have met; has often served me essentially as a spokesman, and still more valuably as a repertory of reference in regard to the manners and institutions of his country. He has, moreover, what is not common and leads him to be more communicative, a strong abstract bias in favour of us Franks. I say abstract, because the Circassians, although decidedly a lively race, have almost in no instance shown a disposition for particular external knowledge—save in regard to the relative strength of the "Seven Kings of Christendom."

I have observed the same indisposition in the Asiatic Turks, which leads me to the belief that curiosity about foreign parts is a factitious propensity caused among us by geography, voyages and travels, and histories; and where even the two latter stimulants are wanting, the former may be sometimes a sufficient nucleus to give us a desire to gather around it further knowledge; while the vague notion these people have of the rest of the world is not of sufficient interest to distract their attention, even briefly, from the concerns of their portion of it.

I may really say that here I come *home;* for my

reception yesterday, after ten days' absence, was as hearty from men, women, children and dogs, as if I had been of the household by birth.

Sûkwa, 7th February.—Another approximation having become necessary in order to elicit production of the state letters—and as I wished to see a stone in this neighbourhood on which there was said to be some inscription—I set out for this place on the 4th. I communicated with the judge on my way, and at length received from him a copy of a letter from the chiefs to Sefir Bey, and the original of that addressed to the chiefs by the Russian general when at Semez. I send you without comment translations of both, and of the Circassian answer *.

On my way here I observed immense flights of geese making, amid the dense fog then prevailing, their annual and heaven-taught way, back from the sea to the Kûban.

This is the last glen on the coast towards Anapa, and its termination towards the sea is but about two hours' walk from that fortress; so that residence in it would be a much more dangerous matter than it is, were it not that some pretty high and steep hills occupy the intervening space. To the southward, between this and the next stream and glen, called Deswa, runs a short range of very high and steep hills, whose summits are clad with lofty forests, and whose bases towards the sea are precipitous, preventing any passage that way. Fortunately for the hardy inhabitants of this Swiss-looking district, the shore northward

* All three will be found in the Appendix.

of the Sûkwa is also precipitous. Yet the Russians have thrice found means to make their way, and with artillery, across the northern hills, to plunder and ravage the hamlets amid them (which were inhabited till within this year, and are partially inhabited even yet) and those of the glen; and it was at the mouth of this stream that they burned last year a vessel belonging to Sefir Bey, whose captain had been so fool-hardy as to allow her to lie ashore there for sundry weeks. On these occasions the troops from the fortress set forth so early that, in spite of the watch on the hills, they were enabled to surprise many of the hamlets so completely, that their inmates had to escape from their beds to the woods, and lost, as some of them said to me, "all, even their very hens." The proprietors of fifteen hamlets were thus totally ruined last year; yet still they cling to their native rocks, and prefer penury to wealth without freedom.

My host of yesterday lost, by one of these forages, nine hundred sheep; and when the general offered to restore them—on an understanding, of course, of future partnership—*Kûrum* Bati-Mirza, although these sheep formed the bulk of his property, and although many others have accepted such offers, with Roman fortitude sent back word; "that the general was welcome to them, as he had still enough for all his wants, and wished from him no favour."

This heroic old man — through the expression of whose fine features there runs a vein of caustic humour—had previously interested me by the liveliness both of his hospitality and wit. It was he who

mentioned to me the stone with an inscription in his woods. Yet I had no sooner entered his guest-house than he loudly abused my conductor, Vardan, for his having brought me "to a place where there was fit accommodation for oxen only," and then immediately set his people to work to make a blazing fire (which the snow and bleak wind on the hills made most acceptable), and to run and borrow a mattress and pillows for me, as all his best furniture had been removed to safer quarters at a distance, and he remained in the glen but for the accommodation of his remaining sheep and oxen.

He joked over his disasters, fed me heartily, and, in the tone of a Sir Fretful Plagiary, screamed to the young folks, who, as usual, had crowded in from the neighbourhood to see the guests—to sit down and eat up the rest of our mutton. He took me himself to see the stone, then to see the fortress of Anapa; and had this morning set forth to accompany me home, although very unwell from cold and fever and in spite of my remonstrances, to which, however, he was at length obliged to yield.

The stone for which the Russians are said to have offered a high price, and which I expected to have found to be the one mentioned by Monsieur de Marigny, is placed amid a coppice on the hill, a little above the hamlet of Bati-Mirza. It is of a shell-conglomerate, the inscription, necessarily rude at first, has become much defaced by the weather. As for its form and inscription, I refer you and the rest of the curious and learned, to the drawing I made of it. In the neighbourhood there

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

G. Barnard, lith. from a Sketch by Jas. Stanislaus Bell, Esq.

GREEK CROSS, ABOVE THE GLEN OF SÛAWA.

is not even a tradition about its origin. The stone mentioned by M. de Marigny had formed the head-piece of a hearth in a house of the neighbourhood; but the house had been burned and the stone broken, and my host repeatedly assured me, that not even a fragment of the inscription on it could now be had. I ascertained, further, that it was not marble, but of like fragile nature with the other; whence I infer that no *ancient* Greek had worked it.

Aghsmûg, 13*th*.—On my return to the purlieus of the congress, to give further suggestions respecting another letter to Sefir Bey, Shiratlûkh, the eldest son of Kehri-kû Shamuz, spent an evening with me, during which I gleaned from him what information a journey into greater Kabarda, from which he has just returned, had yielded, and I am sorry to have to report other atrocities of that chief of assassins, Sass. I metioned to you last summer, that a band of patriots had renounced their possessions in the plains of Great Kabarda, and fled from Russian domination into Abazak, where they had formed a little colony, whither many of their serfs and adherents had come to join them, and that among them was a prince of the very highest grade and most ancient lineage. This person, Besleni-kû Arslan-Gheri, was still but a young man, yet he had well merited his agnomen of *arslan*, for he was entirely lion-hearted; and the accounts that are in circulation respecting his courage and indefatigable spirit of enterprise resemble romance. Judge Mehmet, for instance, told me that last summer when he and many others of this province

were in Abazak, receiving the adhesion of the chiefs to the answer to the document sent by Sefir Bey, Prince Arslan-Gheri and his band of some sixteen, returned from the Russian frontier with a number of Cossack prisoners, having then killed and taken in all twenty-five, in which enterprise the prince, who was not only the leader, but the chief performer, as in other enterprises—in the planning and performance of which he frequently spent many days and nights consecutively without any repose—had himself wounded General Sass, and broken the arm of the *pristav* (or superintendant) of the frontier. He too was pretty severely wounded in the side, and was just cured when he again set forth with four or five companions, with whom he captured other six Cossacks. He then told his friends it was a shame for them to return home with so small a number of prisoners, and that if they would wait in the woods near the frontier in Besni, where they then were, he would bring them provisions. For this purpose he unfortunately proceeded to the hamlet of a near relative, Prince Besleni-kû Ali Gheri, with whom he was then on terms of great intimacy, but whom Sass had seduced to betray him, with promises of munificent reward. This wretch therefore, after having furnished the required provisions, urgently pressed Arslan to spend a portion of the night in taking some repose after the great fatigue he had undergone. To this he consented; and he and his servant beside him soon fell into a profound sleep, from which the latter says that they were awoke by being fired upon; that their weapons had been all removed save a pistol which

his master had beneath his pillow, and which he fired and then fell; and that he also immediately afterwards fell senseless from a wound, but recovered subsequently and escaped.

Next day the body of the prince, which had received five shot-wounds, was interred. But the malignity of Sass was not yet satisfied; for he no sooner heard of the murder having been accomplished, than he set forth with a detachment, had the corpse dug up and thrown aside in the woods for the dogs or wolves to mangle, no one of that neighbourhood at that time venturing to give it further burial. Young Shiratlûkh happened, however, to return that way, soon after, and deeply impressed as he had been by the spirit of the young hero, whose acquaintance he had made while he lay wounded in Abazak, he procured the assistance of a friend, and again consigned the body to the earth in secret. Sass is said to have forthwith paid the chief murderer, Ali Gheri, a thousand roubles, and to have afterwards further rewarded him liberally upon the delivery of the arms of Arslan, which he is reported to have sent to St. Petersburg, no doubt with another account of his mode of procuring them than that here given.

Shiratlûkh, who is anything but an enthusiast, says that the lamentation at the fall of this chief was great and general on his way, and that some of his friends in Abazak proceeded immediately to the frontier of Besni—where the murderer, Ali Gheri, lives under the protection of the Russians, with whom, you may remember, that province is at peace—

to execute vengeance; that they waylaid him, but had only yet broken his arm by a shot.

Sass has already exhausted all my "thunder;" yet I must say that in thus attempting to turn contempt upon one who had fought so gallantly in the most sacred of all causes, he seems to me like one who, after having acquired an article by robbery, seeks to raise the cry of thief against the rightful owner for endeavouring to regain it.

Lest however I should be thought to have condemned lightly in this instance (but Shiratlûkh, remember, is not the only evidence), even this "bold bad man," I shall state what I consider to be the nature of the presumptive evidence against him; and it is not to be supposed that other than presumptive evidence can be had against him in such a case. First then, there was his personal hostility to the prince, caused by their personal conflict, and the wound Sass (who justly piques himself on his prowess) received on the occasion. Next, the singular courage, dexterity, and enterprise of Arslan, which bade fair to destroy the influence the general seeks to gain in these provinces on the Kûban, which, as you know, he had declared annexed to the empire. Thirdly, the total absence of any existing feud or ill-will between the relatives *, or of any known motive why Ali should, by committing the murder, have drawn upon himself the hatred of his countrymen, even in

* I learned subsequently that there had been a violent feud between them some years before. A reconciliation, however, had taken place, and for some time previous to the murder the friendship between the two cousins appeared to be both sincere and strong.

Besni, and the extreme danger of vengeance from Arslan's numerous and powerful friends and adherents—other than a promise of reward. Fourthly, the total improbability that Ali should have incurred this danger speculatively, or without precise engagement as to the benefit he should receive by so doing: and fifthly, the damning circumstances of the general having immediately rewarded the murderer, and exhibited such savage joy over the body of his victim.

Shiratlûkh confirms what I had before heard of the inhabitants of Great Kabarda having been generally disarmed. Those who still retain their weapons have each a ticket or bill of permission. Imagine, for a moment, individuals of that chivalrous race licensed like our ticket-porters, and like them obliged to do for hire whatever they are bidden. My informant saw many such who had just returned wounded from an expedition against some of their mountain countrymen (the Tshetshenses I believe), and another, on a larger scale, was ordered, and then suddenly countermanded while in preparation. Of those who had been impressed with the army sent here this year, the princes and higher nobles received each two hundred, and the tokavs each sixty roubles, in full for the expedition, and the traitor abbatts each a rouble per day.

The Russians have commenced colonising Great Kabarda also, (the cheapest and most effective mode of retaining a conquest, according to Machiavelli, whose "Prince," all things considered, I take to be the text-book of their statesmen,) and many villages

of their short-nosed, high-cheek-boned, and small-eyed race are *there already* established. The difference of religion will long prevent intermarriage with the natives (if the Russians be permitted to retain possession), otherwise we might, by anticipation, deplore the diminished beauty of the Kabardans, in like manner as I have heard lamented the change that has occurred in this respect, as well as in morals, in the once-famed Georgia, through the foul inundation of the blood of frosty, yet lascivious, Muscovy. But the axiom of Clare, that master-mind in the science of government, that "Religion is the great bond of society," appears to be well known in Russia, (as is shown by her efforts against Roman Catholicism in Poland;) and if it were otherwise she has had abundant opportunity for learning this cardinal truth in her various contests with Mussulmans, among whom she must have ever found that her stanchest opponents were those who held firmest by their creed. As the majority are, however, still beyond her control, she judges it best to temporise with those within it, and to employ with them self-interest, a more effectual engine for conversion than the antiquated one—force. Through this means she has gotten some of the Kabardans and others baptized, but their number is as yet very small.

It appears to me but a fair inference (though not the one intended) from the theorem of his lordship, that if religion be the great bond of society, (but some think that true religion should loosen these distinctive bonds,) difference of religion, as well as difference of language, must have been permitted for

the purpose of binding men together in distinct societies, and thus enabling them by conjoined efforts to improve their condition. Without some such gravitating principles, indeed, it may easily be imagined what vagrant cosmopolites men must have become; and although, of the two, peculiarity of religion be unquestionably the most powerful, peculiarity of language must be allowed to be the first in operation. The populations of the Caucasus afford curious exemplifications of the workings of each. First, their subdivision, according to their languages, into six or eight distinct communities. Then the adoption of Christianity by the Georgians and many others, combining them with the remote Greeks of Constantinople, against their Mussulman neighbours. Thirdly, the introduction of Islamism, producing rancorous enmity between the Georgians and their neighbours to the north, as well as in other directions. Fourthly, This jeopardy inducing the Georgians to make their fatal appeal to their co-religionists of Muscovy: and, lastly, the community of religion and of interest among the rest, inducing them to court the aid of the Turks, yet not prevailing to countervail the distinct cohesion caused merely by peculiarity of language; and thus leaving each community to be attacked in detail by a common enemy ten times more powerful than they all.

I set out for this place on the morning of the day before yesterday, not a little oppressed in spirit, as it was the day which had been fixed for the trial for treason of Tshûrûk-okû Tûghûz, a noble of middle age, and most gallant presence, in whom my coun-

trymen and I had always involuntarily felt much interest (as you may have already seen), on account of the undaunted courage, the enterprise, the princely generosity, and extreme liveliness of his character. I have told you also of the banquet and presents he prepared for our first reception at his hamlet last year. I knew he had many enemies, some of the Tshûpakos, for instance, on account of his having carried off the daughter of Indar-okû, after she had been betrothed to a noble of Abazak; for having in concert with Hatukwoï, one of their sept, and some others, sold to the Turks the widow of a Turk, who had taken the oath of incorporation with their fraternity, on which and other accounts a large portion of his own sept had declared that they considered him no longer under their protection, nor themselves bound to demand the price of his blood of him who might slay him; and partly through the extreme incaution, and irregularity of his conduct in general.

But these charges of treason—repeated visits to the Russians without permission, and in supposed violation of his oath; the receipt of money from them in the fort of Pshat, and spending three days in the fortress of Semez, to obtain restitution of or compensation for one of their own deserters whom he had purchased—seemed such as could not and should not be passed lightly over, and they made me fear that the loud denunciations I had heard against him might end perhaps in the forfeiture of his life. He had absented himself from home also for several days that the congress was in his neighbourhood; and although he had previously sent word to it and to myself,

expressing his readiness to stand his trial, and abide by the consequences. At length he was found and brought from Adughûm; special orders were sent round the day before the trial for an extra muster of strength, which further wrought on my imagination; and as these persons, so summoned, flocked on their way into the hamlet I was lodged in on the 11th, and the very weather seemed to sympathise, I felt as if I might have exclaimed in the words of Addison;

> "The dawn is overcast, the morning low'rs,
> And heavily in clouds brings on the day:
> The great, th' important day, big with the fate"
> Of Tûghûz.

We set forth a numerous cavalcade, the majority of whom, better trained than I to the results of such proceedings, were not at all in my humour; careering their horses, and joking and laughing among themselves. We found the congress assembled on a knoll in the midst of the valley of Semez, and after communicating to it some arrangements I had made with Judge Mehmet (who had absented himself on account of having quarrelled with some of the members) I departed just as Tûghûz with a large cortège arrived on the ground, judging it best, however deeply interested I felt in what was about to take place, that I should not be present, lest an appeal should be made to me in mitigation of punishment, which appeared in this case improper, and because mercy seemed to be too much leaned to, in general, *under existing circumstances:* and this opinion has been again supported, for yesterday, after an interval of frequent anxiety, I was not a little sur-

prised to learn that our friend had been sentenced only to a fine of twenty-four oxen; and that the reason for this lenity was that he had declared upon oath that his visits to the enemy's camp were for the purpose of seeing some of his friends from the East in their service; that he had never, on these occasions, spoken any treason; that he had never received from the Russians any money, but only *a dress* and *a ring* for his wife; that old Kehri-kû had sanctioned his visit to the fort of Semez; and that he had not received there compensation for the returned deserter, but only a promise of it in future, after having been for two days detained in prison, and loaded with irons, and without food or drink, as a spy! I think I must now be held justified.

The Circassians in this matter of reclaiming runaways (about which I have often spoken to them, but in vain) make a curious distinction. It is common for them to obtain restitution from the Russians of their serfs who escape beyond the Kûban (generally malefactors) provided they be willing to return; but the peculiar blame imputed to Tûghûz, was his having gone without general permission (which is always held requisite) to obtain compensation or restitution of a *Russian deserter;* in doing which he appears to me to have merited applause, by having made an excellent caricature—at which the Russians must have laughed heartily—of the practice altogether; for the object of the latter in granting restitution must of course in any case be but to make traitor-friends.

I may mention another incident which occurred

now, in case it have hereafter any result. During the long winter evenings I have had time enough to ponder over the tide of the affairs of this community, and I have come to the conviction, that although ostensibly its directions be right, and although the opinions and behaviour of all those who have any power over its direction be highly satisfactory, there may be doubt entertained as to the mass of the under-current of public opinion, in which I have sometimes thought (perhaps erroneously) that I observed symptoms of a portentous stillness prophetic of the ebb. Of this however I have, of all others, the least opportunity to judge, for the ripple around me always, of course, indicates a right direction. Still it appears but natural to suppose that—however beneficial and satisfactory be the general character and administration of the measures of late adopted for keeping the body-politic in order—something of a palpable and striking nature is wanted to act upon its mind and prevent that despondency which the unbalanced military success of the enemy is but too likely to produce. The large expedition across the Kûban, if it had been successful, might have tended toward this desirable effect; but in other respects, I have always felt averse to such forays, as likely perhaps to be of nearly as much detriment as benefit to the cause of the country; because they form some excuse (however fallacious) for the Russian Government—*both at home and abroad*—in regard to the necessity it lies under of continuing this war; whereas hostilities performed within the frontier cannot easily be construed into anything but justifiable defence;

and they appear to be better calculated moreover for sustaining the spirit of the people. For these reasons I have determined to recur to the endeavours my countrymen and I made formerly to induce the chiefs to undertake the capture of the forts constructed on the Circassian soil—especially as my further experience as to their localities and the nature of their construction—both form and material—has further and fully convinced me of the practicability of such an enterprise, provided it be prepared for in secrecy, and executed during night. These two requisites seem to me indeed what has hitherto been wanting in the tactics of the Circassians to have procured greater success for what they have already attempted in this department of their warfare.

In furtherance of these views, I took occasion before leaving the large assembly of people caused by the trial of Tûghûz, to address them shortly—in allusion to the neighbouring fort of Semez—in such terms as I thought likely to excite their shame in permitting their being annoyed "by the handful of *Ghiaours* cooped within a ditch down yonder, where the half of them are sickened and about to die." "We are waiting till they be all dead," gaily replied the veteran Mensûr, to the delight of the group of *dehli-khans* by whom he is usually surrounded for the enjoyment of his ready-flowing wit and good-humour. This measure however is one that I have greatly at heart, not only for the reasons I have already given, but also that if it were once fairly initiated, I should feel certain of its being carried out into complete success against most of the forts,

thus affording the opportunity I so much desire of returning to England, with assurance that my leaving this country would not be prejudicial to its interests. I therefore stopped at the first hamlet on our way across the valley, and sent back a messenger to urge Mensûr to concert measures for surprising the new fort here—volunteering to share in the enterprise. I fear however that it will not be so speedily put into execution.

LETTER XXIX.

POLITICAL ORGANISATION—RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATION — JUDICIAL MATTERS — WINTER-BERTHING OF A TURKISH VESSEL—SCENE AT ITS DEPARTURE FOR CONSTANTINOPLE — SKETCHES OF THE PRINCIPAL PASSENGERS—ORIGIN OF SUJUK-KALEH—THE CASE OF THE VIXEN—RUSSIAN POLICY—ANCIENT CIRCASSIAN CITY OF SHANTKHUR—HUNTING INCIDENTS ON THE KUBAN —EXPLOITS OF CIRCASSIAN WARRIORS—MODELS OF CONJUGAL LIFE.

AGHSMUG, 18*th February*, 1839.

MY DEAR ——. Since the beginning of December one Turkish vessel has sailed from the south, and two have arrived; but all my efforts to get the one at Ozerek despatched with letters for Sefir Bey, have proved unavailing, till now that the period of the Kûrban-Beiram approaches, immediately after which sacrifice it is promised she shall proceed to sea with the first fair wind, and all the merchants are in bustle of preparation.

Horace's description of the merchant of Italy can be but little sympathised in by one of England, backed as he is by Lloyd's, and experimentally ignorant of the "*luctantem Icariis fluctibus Africum.*" But in the Circassian trader one sees the picture of the past brought again to life—the fear of the wintry storms—the consolations of repose in the snug farm—and then the indocility to endure

poverty, leading by-and-by to the repairing of the shattered bark to set forth once more in quest of gain. It is, I believe, these "*mercatores metuentes*" with two strings to their bow—agriculture and commerce—who have chiefly thwarted me in getting the vessel in question sent away sooner. I hope, however, that the lecture I have given some of them may lead to their compensating their country for this *contre-temps* by their bringing back powder for sale, instead of trusting, as hitherto, to the fortuitous importation of Turks. I have just sent off my dragoman upon this subject to Az-Demir (a person of influence who has been appointed envoy with the letters), and some others of weight. But I must say for these merchants and others that they are at present not without cause of apprehension, as a general impression now prevails that a Turkish vessel has been lost at sea, and that every soul on board, to the amount, it is believed, of no less than one hundred and fifty, have perished! Among them was Suleiman, a Turk of very gentlemanly address—of whom my countrymen and I had received most liberal hospitality—and his sixteen young serfs. It is presumed she foundered at sea during a gale on the night of the 20th October, when a Russian vessel with all hands was lost at Pshat. This is the only Turkish wreck I have heard of having occurred while I have been in this country.

25th.—In talking over the subject of the fraternities with my referendary Navrûz (who has inherited from his father both an historical and legal taste), for the purpose of having better ground for establishing a

further recommendation with respect to some ostensible form of government, I have come at the understanding of what has hitherto to me been incomprehensible; viz. an apparent precedence of some fraternities over others, or ranging of many under one head, while all were yet called equal. Thus in the nomination of individuals to form a government, made at the recommendation of Daûd Bey, I found that sixteen seniors had been chosen as representatives, two for each of eight fraternities, in which was said to be comprehended all the infinity of smaller tokav fraternities in the two provinces, as far as Khissa or Vardan *. I find however that these eight fraternities were not thus distinguished on account of any precedence accorded them—for all are held to be equal, and there is no specific name for such division unless we call such the general one of *tarko*, or " sworn together"—but that it was caused solely by eight consanguinities or septships—held to prevent intermarriage between the members of the fraternities, comprehended in them and their serfs also—into which the whole tokav population is divided, and that it was the individuals who were selected for their capacity, not their peculiar fraternities for their pre-eminence.

In like manner the fraternities of the nobles are divided into five consanguinities, or tarkos; but they, in the affair of government, were contented with one representative for all—*Tshûpako* Kehri-kû Shamuz, who was appo nted envoy to Constantinople.

* The fraternities of the three races have latterly become much interwoven as far as Ghagra, and connexion by marriage extends even beyond that.

It was agreed on at the time, that the sixteen representatives should be divided into two parties of eight, who, with the chief judge of each province alternately, should assemble in the valley of Semez. First my arrival, and then that of the Russians, with war, unfortunately suspended this initiatory attempt.

The trials have been suspended for about three weeks, that the members of the congress may attend to their domestic affairs; and still more, that they may be with their families at the notable period of the Kûrban-Beiram (the sacrifice of the Beiram), when every strict Mussulman who can afford it sacrifices some animal—an ox, cow of three years old (a camel sometimes among the Arabs and Turks), sheep, or goat—when a short prayer is pronounced by him who kills it, and responded to by those present, and the flesh, when cooked, is distributed, in whole or in part, among the poor.

The trials may be about half over; but the remuneration to those aiding in them does not appear to compensate for the time consumed, as they have already occupied nearly two months, and all, for instance, that has fallen, in division, to the share of Mehmet the judge, is one cow. Mensûr, another chief manager in them, refused anything. There were inrolled (or rather notched on the staff—*staffed*) about three hundred persons.

28*th*.—I am happy to find that the spirit of the Turkish captains is not yet subdued: three vessels have arrived since the beginning of December—one at Vardan and two at Neghipsekwa. One of the latter,

which has just come, made a previous attempt, but was driven back by stress of weather, and overtaken by a gale on the Asiatic coast, where, among the luggage and cargo heaved overboard, were, it is said, letters from Sefir Bey for the country and others for myself, which the person charged with them says he regrets more than all the bales he lost upon the occasion, as he understood their contents to be of great importance. This is my first loss by importation, and it occurs at a time when I have but little patience left to endure it.

Having had a visit of Hadji Ismael, one of the judges, for a couple of days, I have had further opportunity of informing myself about the state of education, which is still in its infancy here. The only teachers are the mollahs, to whom those in the neighbourhood of the mosk pay, of free will, one per cent. of honey, ten per cent. of grain, one in thirty of cows and oxen, and one in forty of sheep and goats, for performing service there, attending death-beds, &c. Besides these duties, they are bound to give instruction (Turkish religious reading and writing) to the children (male or female) of those who wish it, and even to qualify such as are intended for judges. Ismael, who has but newly moved into his present charge (he being as free as others to change his residence), has but sixteen hamlets in his neighbourhood, which send him twelve pupils. By his account, three years' instruction qualify for a mollah; but that of fifteen or twenty years barely suffices for a kadi, or judge. Some acquaintance with Arabic and Persian, as well as a perfect knowledge

of Turkish being requisite. In the north of the two provinces, that is, to the east and to the north of Ghelenjík, Ismael calculates that there are about forty such schools as his, having each from ten to sixty scholars. Averaging them at twenty, the number of children receiving education may be thus taken, for the portion of the country specified, at about eight hundred. The rest of the population may, I believe, be supposed to receive such education in somewhat similar proportion.

I do not doubt that Monsieur de Marigny, in his two notable examples of Circassian justice, narrates faithfully what was told him by Tausch the spy; but their authenticity we may well doubt: for on my repeating them to the chief judge Hadji-oghlû Mehmet, he appeared to take them entirely in joke, and afterwards told them to another senior, to their mutual great merriment. Upon my asking, however, seriously whether they were consistent with Circassian usage, he replied, "I don't know how it may have been anciently, but I never heard of such law."

He told me, as a real example of their law, of a similar case of accident which he had before him lately. A person wishing to slaughter a bullock, got the assistance of a neighbour, who, in approaching it incautiously as it lay tied on the ground, had one of his eyes put out by a jerk of one of the horns. Conceiving himself entitled to full compensation for the loss of his organ, he instituted proceedings before the judge, hoping for a verdict of a hundred oxen; but the latter informed him that such an award could only be given in a case of wilful maiming, which

could not possibly have been contemplated by his neighbour in asking his assistance; he therefore awarded him the value of a cow (a deodand as we would say), and promised, as the sufferer was poorer than the other, to endeavour to prevail with the latter to add something more. The appellant, however, was not satisfied with this judgment, and the case stands over.

And now having written so far, I find I must either erase the whole, or add further evidence; and as a faithful historian, I think it best to do the latter, for it exemplifies the state of transition in which law here is at present. I certainly thought the evidence of the chief judge the most infallible and comprehensive to be had in such matters; but in talking over the subject with my noble friend Navrûz since committing the above to paper, I find that Judge Mehmet has a great bias in favour of Turkish law, the excellency of which I presume he had rather sought to set forth to me in the above instance than to answer my inquiry as to that of Circassia; for Navrûz—who, by-the-by, is a stickler for the excellences of the latter in many respects—says that the person who lost his eye, lost it in consequence of the other having called for his aid, and that therefore the other would be held bound by native law to compensate him by the payment of the lowest, perhaps of two standard values of fifty oxen.

This therefore, after all, seems to be the great principle in Circassian legislation; that the loss of life, or of any member or valuable organ, must be compensated by him in whose service it was sus-

tained, *or who caused it*, in these proportions;—200 oxen for wilful and 100 for accidental homicide (reserving the option of blood for blood in the former case, if insisted on by the relatives); 100 for the wilful and 50 for the accidental injury of any member or valuable organ, and half these amounts if the sufferer be a serf. I find also in the case of the eye a circumstance at which our lawyers would smile: it appears that the question was not formally tried and decided (in that event there could have been no further recourse); but that the sufferer merely asked the judge what would be his decision if he brought it before him! As to Monsieur de Marigny's instances, however, Navrûz' opinion coincides with that of the judge, with this qualification—that possibly long ago, and towards the south, a man who set fire to a tree, by the falling of which another was accidentally killed, might have been held liable to compensate his relations.

Sûa, 11th March.—On the 5th I came to the coast here, at the earnest request of Az-Demir, the envoy chosen to convey the letters to Sefir Bey, informing him of the result of the campaign of devastation with which the country was threatened. A letter has also been addressed to the Government of England on the same subject. I subjoin translations of both *.

I witnessed the departure of the vessel which carried the envoy. In conjunction with the bold features of the coast, it formed an exceedingly exciting and picturesque scene; but instead of detailing

* They will be found in the Appendix.

to you the feelings excited by seeing some abandoning the country, and others going to inform themselves fully as to the state of its hopes, and determine accordingly, all which you may well imagine, I have made a sketch of the spectacle, which may enable you to complete the mental picture. I cannot, however, omit mentioning one of the passengers, Memish-Oghlû, a Turk of about ninety (who, with his daughter, was removing finally from the country), because through him I have obtained a germe of information as to the foundation of Sûdjûk-kaleh, which may eventually yield wondrous branchings. He was for many years *mollah* there, and, according to his account, it was originally (one hundred and forty-three years ago) merely a colony of Krim Tatar refugees and others. I regret that the casual encounter with this individual, and the hurry of the occasion, did not admit of my getting further information; but I doubt not of finding abundant other sources.

12*th*.—As I cannot, however, sleep away this final interval of trial, I may as well occupy so much of it in giving you a further description concerning the cause of my present fidgets; viz., witnessing the departure of that vessel. I came here, as I said, according to urgent request, to lend my influence in getting her off; but there proved to be no occasion for my exertions, for the rumour of my movement brought after me all the lagging merchants with their convoys of serfs and goods, within a couple of days of my arrival, and just as I had prescribed some strong measures with regard to them. What leisure, therefore, a little daily exercise and numerous visiters

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G. Barnard lith. ft

From a Sketch by Jas Stanislaus Bell, Esq.re

Day & Haghe Lith.rs to the Queen

EMBARKATION AT THE ECHELLE OF OZEREK.

left me, was devoted to correspondence, which I finished early in the day fixed for the departure, and then went down to the beach to witness it, having never happened to be present at such a spectacle.

The small Türkish craft was already displaced from her snug berth at the foot of a hill, where, amid some bushes, she had passed the winter under the semblance (to those at sea) of a tree, having had her mast graced with branches of pitch-pine, and had been hauled over the broad shore of shingle into her proper element, where she stood with yards squared, and all in readiness, straining, in the strong east wind, like a greyhound on the slip. It was truly a lively and picturesque scene, and I hope the sketch may convey some idea of it, although the wind was so strong and bitterly cold that my fingers grew numbed in a very few minutes' exposure.

The items of composition are; 1st, the peaked and quaint-rigged ship; 2nd, the straw "bothie," where the patient and hardy Turks had wintered; 3rd, sundry groups of females, robed and long-veiled, sheltered under a hill, or walking down in stately procession for embarkation; 4th, strings of loaded horses, messengers galloping here and there, a fire with a group of smokers, the brown hills, the purple mountains, white cliffs, and foaming ocean. If these be not picturesque materials, let Dr. Syntax come here, and himself search for better!

But the scene, under the circumstances of the country, had excitement for more than the fancy; various episodes of grave and heart-stirring interest, according to the various circumstances and characters

of the actors. There was Memish-oghlû, the aged Turk, who had been priest of Sûjûk-kaleh, when what has long been made a desolate ruin by the repeated assaults of the *Ghiaour*, was a happy and hopeful colony of his countrymen; and who was now flying with his only daughter, from the land where he had spent his life, and buried the rest of his family, to seek his fortune, and lay his bones in one (which he hoped) beyond the grasp of the unbeliever. There was Tshûrûkh, one of the only two fat Circassians I know, a "buirdly" elderly gentleman, with white beard, handsome and placid features, and equally placid manner: for he is one of the few epicureans here, who, though by no means destitute of courage, has always studied and ministered well to his own comfort and that of those about him; and he had long since determined that, when the case of his country became desperate, he would abandon it, and move himself, his family, and effects, into Turkey: in pursuance of which sage determination, he was now about to proceed to Constantinople himself, with a large proportion of the value of his property, intending, if he find the accounts unfavourable for the independence of his country, to remain there and write for his wife and family to follow him, whom he requested me, in that case, to take charge of! There was Hattûkh Uzûkh, his neighbour, but a person of totally different character and appearance; tall, spare, yet muscular in form, with strongly-delineated and somewhat harsh features, well suited to express his gnarled yet fiery disposition, which had often of late stood me in good stead, when others

hung aback where promptitude of action was necessary. He is a dauntless warrior, and is equally determined to resist the Russians, and to partake in his country's fate, whatever it may be. In leaving it—though for a short time—his wife, family, and possessions, at this crisis of peculiar danger, his veins seemed filled with lightning: and as—after having given him a letter of introduction, and some fair words—I stood on the margin of the beach, diverting my own thoughts by imagining those of the others embarking, he came hurriedly towards me, and, his eyes speaking of daggers, caught me in his arms, and gave me, like a vice, a farewell embrace. There was Az-Demir, the envoy, a quiet and cautious person, whose feelings were then very unusually and diversely excited, what between his pride and exultation at having been chosen envoy, and being about to make his first visit to "the great city," (for which he had put himself to considerable expense of preparation, in new silver-laced clothes, the purchase of a slave to sell for his further outlay, &c.,) and his fears at leaving his family and large farming possessions, so near upon the time of invasion, and in a situation of such danger as that of his hamlet, which is in the plain of Anapa, and but about three hours from that fortress. Although of the rank beneath, he had chosen a noble who could speak Turkish for his attendant; and he now begged of me to give this person advice as to the deference that should be shown to him during his mission; which I did, and called, moreover, to our little conclave, seated on the shingle, two of the principal persons among the pas-

sengers, and counselled them, as I begged of them in consequence of some symptoms of jealousy, to counsel the rest, to honour the choice of their countrymen, in showing respect to their envoy. All this, and my advice to himself, which he had requested, as to his conduct in Stambûl, and my giving him letters of introduction there, proved too much for his feelings, which he thus vented—first, he called his son and told him that everything in his hamlet was to be at my orders if I chose to go and live there, as he begged me to do; then he rose and did obeisance to my hand, placing it on his lips and forehead; and then he shed a copious flood of tears! There was Hadji Meforatli, a remarkably handsome and well-formed person in the prime of life, of a most intrepid and energetic character. Whatever his feelings were, he seemed to have discussed them beforehand, and to have gotten them in subjection; nothing remaining apparent but great activity in the business of embarkation. If I were head here, he should, at least, be one of my arms*. There was Halima, a very wealthy and well-fed Turk, who has a grand house and four wives at Constantinople, besides his matrimonial establishment

* That and every other earthly speculation concerning him is now blighted. On returning last autumn from that voyage, the vessel he was in was chased by a gun-boat from the fort of Toapsé. yet she got to the beach and landed her passengers safely, all but the intrepid Hadji, who with the captain too rashly determined to attempt running from the gun-boat to save the vessel and cargo in some other creek to the southward. This a want of wind prevented them effecting, and the corpse of the Hadji, found some days after on a lonely part of the shore, proves that, sooner than fall into the hands of the '*Moscov*,' he had thrown himself overboard, in hope to gain the land by swimming.

here. He felt all his importance as principal freighter of the vessel; and, as he stood, like father Æneas, upon the lofty poop, tricked out in silver lace and burnished arms, he cried aloud that he would wait no longer; and brandishing his dagger, threatened to cut the rope that held the vessel to the shore. So we shall let her sail, as I dare say you have had enough of her passengers; yet I must just say that, although she had in all probability a short passage, it must have been one of great suffering to the women and children (one of them but about a year old), who to the number of about forty, with at least as many men, were exposed on the deck of this little craft, for one night, at least, of very tempestuous and bitter wind.

The thermometer on that and the following day stood at 20°.

On my way to the coast, I received from Judge Mehmet the packet of letters, &c., which rumour reported to have been lost, and which was in fact recovered from the hungry waves by being washed ashore in a package which had been heaved overboard during a storm on the Asiatic coast. In this packet I have received, by a copy of the "Times" of 22nd June last, an account of the debate in the House of Commons on the capture of the Vixen, of which, so far as the Foreign Minister and his adherents are concerned, nothing seems to me more appropriate to be said than the apt quotation used by Sir Robert Peel—"Si pugna est, ubi tu pulsas ego vapulo tantum:" for reason was not encountered by reason, but overborne by gross misrepresentation and contemptible "clap-trap." But the mass of

ignorance, of indifference, or of party-prejudice, upon which Lord Palmerston and his abettors founded, must indeed be great when they could with such effrontery and duplicity parade their cautious regard for the "great interests" which the question involved.

It is high time that the members of that august assembly were like the administrating seniors here, *tarko-khass*, or sworn to justice; a ministry would then find that its fate depended upon the integrity of its measures, not the muster of its party.

Psemegûg, 19*th*.—In accepting some kind invitations I have got thus far on a little farewell tour in these parts, in which I purposed combining three objects; 1st, a diffusion of the views received by my last packet of the insult to England perpetrated in Persia through the instigation of the Russian general*, and of encouragement to the Circassians in adding this to their other causes for hope that England cannot much longer remain passive. 2nd. To visit what remains of the so-called ancient Circassian city of Shautkhur. 3rd. To try what hunting the banks of the Kûban afford. But I am obliged to renounce the two latter by having sooner than I expected completed my acquaintance with the history of Sûjûk-kaleh, at which I am not more gratified than I am surprised and mortified that information of such importance should have hitherto escaped the research of my countrymen and self: and if I be half afraid that you and those who have aided us in fighting our fiscal battle may think that I am about to play with

* The Russian officers here had already misrepresented this Herat affair by suppressing the name of the English, and stating that a foreign force which interfered had been entirely defeated.

your credulity, what mercy can I expect from our opponents, from those "quietists," who are more desirous of finding reasons for patient endurance of wrong, than of having explained to them its nature?

The truth must however be told, that we have again been dupes of the far-sighted artifice of Russia, as the following account of Sûjûk-kaleh may show:

It was originally of small extent, and constructed (as was also Sûjûk-kaleh) upwards of 150 years ago, by a native chief of this country called Ghertsh Arslan Bey, whose name, as seen by many still alive, was inscribed on the walls; and at that time it served chiefly as a place of refuge for Tatars, who had quitted the Crimea and other places on the invasion of the Russians; and for other strangers permitted to reside there by the prince of Semez, and the neighbouring chiefs. Subsequently the trade of this little colony became considerable, and Basti-kû, prince of Semez, grandfather of Pshemaff, and another native chief, *Abbat* Kerim Gheri*, successively presided over it to preserve order. For which purpose also there were in some manner associated with them, and resident in the place, a deputy from each of the neighbouring fraternities to act as the konaks of the Turkish merchants. After this came and resided there, and in the neighbouring country for several years, an aged Sabakhor (a Turkish official, formerly subordinate to a Pasha), and then for a short time

* I think these two names, which are very common in Circassia, may be corruptions of Krim Gheraï, and may be taken as evidence of the forefathers of those who bear them having been natives of the Crimea, between which country and Circassia there appears to have been formerly much intercourse.

one Ali Pasha, who was exiled to this coast (the deputies also still continuing their residence). But both these individuals, and every one connected with them and with the Turkish government, as well as almost all the inhabitants, removed to Anapa immediately on its construction, about 1781; the latter became the emporium of trade, and Sûjûk-kaleh, deserted by all but a few Tatars and others, became almost dilapidated.

Such was its state when, in 1791, General Godovitsh, with a large Russian force, invaded the country, and who, after having been repulsed in two sanguinary encounters, succeeded in his third attempt in reaching Sûjûk-kaleh, which he found entirely ruined, the Circassians themselves having blown up the walls on his approach—a circumstance well remembered; many having then lost their lives through the hurry and ignorance in which the explosion was performed. In this state of entire ruin it thenceforth remained, until September 1811, when Mareschal le Duc de Richelieu, with another large Russian force, again invaded the country, and succeeded also in reaching Sûjûk-kaleh—that is, its site—where he constructed a fortress, whose ruins I have formerly described, and which remain to this day. In this fortress he placed a garrison, which remained cooped up by the Circassians for about a year, when it was withdrawn, and the fortress entirely dismantled.

Thus ruined it has ever since remained, and remains, I repeat, at this day, (notwithstanding the assurance of Lord Durham of its being garrisoned, or

at least possessed by the Russians,) having reverted into the possession of the neighbouring proprietors, by whom it has been, and now is, occupied as grazing ground!

Let any one make but a summary of its history and see what a strange spectacle it presents. About the year 1696, the Circassians construct on the bay of Semez a fort or rather factory for commerce and the residence of strangers (many of whom were Tatar exiles). More than three quarters of a century thereafter, the trade with Turkey having greatly increased, two Turkish officers come and reside there for a short time, and then (about 1781) depart and are never replaced by others. Three years later, (1784,) Russia having possessed herself of the territory of the Khan or Sultan of the Crimea, imputes to him the formation of some rights over the fort of Sûjûk-kaleh *, with which rights (whether imaginary or not) she invests the *Sultan of Turkey!* Seven years afterwards (1791), the place being almost deserted and in ruins, and indisputably in possession of the natives, who finally destroy it by explosion on the approach of the Russians, the latter, finding it thus entirely ruined, depart and then cede it to the *Sultan of Turkey.* After twenty years more they return (1811), construct a fortress on the site of the ruins, and having occupied it for a year, dismantle and ruin it, and then cede it in this condition to the *Sultan of Turkey.* Eighteen years thereafter (1829) *they compel the Sultan to cede it to them*

* See Appendix.

(together with the *whole* of the Circassian coast), yet do not take possession, and England immediately protests against the acquisition, as contrary to treaty, and makes a reservation of British rights. Seven years thereafter an English vessel arrives to trade there, the place continuing in ruins, and in possession of the natives, who never alienated their rights over it. A Russian vessel arrives and captures the English one, at anchor near the ruins; and the government lawyers of England confirm the capture; *because* the place was then *de facto* in Russian possession; a place which now for forty-five years (save one of Russian occupation twenty-three years previously) had been a ruin in possession of the natives alone! and although the place, to this day, be in ruin and in possession of the natives, the Government of England rejects all English evidence to these effects! If this be not political suicide on the altar of imperial sycophancy, I know not what it is *!

The Foreign Minister of England may plead—as he has pleaded in other cases—ignorance of all these circumstances; to which plea it may be well replied, "For what but such considerations, affecting the multitudinous foreign interests of England, have we a foreign department of government?" The fact, however, is, that while the Foreign Minister of our growing rival employs ever the eyes of an Argus and hands of a

* Further explanation of this extraordinary affair, and of the treaties upon which the Foreign Minister of England based his still more extraordinary determination in regard to it, will be found in the Appendix, where will also be found a solemn declaration in regard to the history of Sûjûk-kaleh, drawn up and signed by the chief judge and other principal elders of Circassia.

Briaræus, in everything that can possibly affect the foreign interests of his country, our functionary, instead of courting important communications, forbids even his consuls to extend theirs beyond precise replies to the queries he sees fit to address to them. It need not, therefore, be wondered at, that he should frequently have to plead ignorance, and that the interests which he pretends to guard should be sacrificed.

It must now be evident that the magniloquent accounts of the captures of Sûjûk-kaleh from the Sultan by General Godovitsh and Mareschal le Duc de Richelieu, and of its restorations to that potentate, were mere political shows and devices by the Russians to invest him with a right of which he was never in possession, and to which he never even pretended; in order to gain a semblance of right for a transfer to themselves! Such, then, is the deep line of distinction to be drawn between Anapa and Sûjûk-kaleh—that, with regard to the former, the Sultan was invited by the Circassians to form there a fortified establishment for trade, for their mutual benefit, which he did entirely at his own expense, maintained there a governor and garrison, and received, as his compensation, the dues levied in trade; whereas, with regard to Sûjûk-kaleh, it appears uncertain whether the Sultan ever received any dues from the Turkish trade there, or had any one resident there for fiscal purposes; and quite indisputable that, at all events, he never garrisoned or had a governor in it; and that it was entirely abandoned as a station for trade for *forty-eight years* previously to its compulsory cession, and utterly ruined and abandoned

for forty-five years previously to the arrival and capture of the Vixen. Indeed the very name, Sûjûk-kaleh (the Sausage-fort), seems to imply its having been a mart for provisions, and that the title of Kaleh, or fort, was given to it ironically.

But the truth of its history does not depend on supposition and inference, for there are many old men, both here and in Turkey, who knew it from almost the beginning. And, now that I have gotten upon the right scent, I find the facts, such as I have narrated, to be supported by the general testimony of the country. I have therefore sent for the chief judge to beg of him to draw up a declaration of the case, and to get appended to it the seals of the most respectable individuals; which declaration I shall send you, with a translation.* Alas for the quietists!

Perhaps it may be wondered that I should not have sooner lighted upon all this information — so important for this country and our own. I wonder so myself, and the only barring cause that I can find on recollection is, that my mind was always pre-occupied and biassed by the Russian accounts of capture (which seemed to imply defence); by the Turkish name of kaleh, or fort; and by the military appearance of the ruins, which I took to be those of Turkish, not Russian, works. And now that I think upon it, a circumstance occurred the year before last which might have led to inquiry; viz., my having observed in the vicinity of the place a green

* Given in the Appendix as aforesaid.

hillock with lime protruding from one side of it, some of which I brought to our lodging as a discovery, when I was told by Shamuz that that lime had been brought there by the Russians. Still dreaming, however, of original Turkish works (the Circassian construction was small and quite dissimilar from the Russian), I thought the lime had been brought there for repairs or amplification—not for original construction.

Although the Turkish government have thus been made a party to this singular piece of political knavery, I doubt not that it will yet tell the truth, and it should be called upon to declare it, and to show proof of original right, possession, government, expenditure or receipt, connected with the "Sausage fort." If, however, it be unwilling to furnish evidence hostile to the great Northern protectorate, it can, nevertheless, be had in abundance from individuals.

With respect to the two minor objects in my tour, my curiosity is allayed for the one and excited for the other, by the accounts of my present estimable host, *Ratûk* Hattav, who narrates, with regard to Shautkhur, a fabulous story of its first occupant having been a youth of great bodily delicacy, but singular intrepidity, who was advised to spend the night upon a bridge over some neighbouring stream, where he witnessed the appalling spectacle of a combat between two hosts of *Jins*, or returned spirits; of his having refused obedience to the mandate of the Chief of the *Jins*; of a beautiful girl having met him on the bridge, and received of him encouragement in her dread to cross it on that night of horrors; of

these two having subsequently been married, and their progeny having been the occupants of the celebrated city from which they emigrated to Temegui, where their descendants resided who now form the princely sept of Bûlatûk. As for the city, or rather village, all that now remains to be seen of it is a fosse enclosing some eight to ten acres between the streams Nefil and Psebebs. I can readily forego the labour of making a couple of days' journeys, in the present inclement weather, to see such a sight; but as to the hunting on the Kûban, my curiosity has been greatly stimulated by Hattav (who in this respect promises to rival "General Boon, backwoodsman of Kentucky,") having shown me the stump of a horn (a portion of which I shall carry home), and given me the description of an animal which I cannot conceive to be any other than that giant of the *cervi*, the elk, which he says abounds on the low, reedy, rich lands on each side of the Kûban.

In one of his many hunting excursions occurred an incident for which, as well as many other valorous deeds, I have often heard his fame through Shamuz and others; and having now got more particulars I shall relate it, notwithstanding the incredulity with which such marvellous tales may be met by some; because, for those who desire to have a solution of the mystery of such protracted resistance of the Circassians to Russia, I cannot find any others—in the absence of all organization and means for calling forth, on invasion, the physical strength of the population—than the strong sense of social obligation which appears to be impressed upon every one, and

the rivalry of heroism among the numerous brave individuals; which heroism not only thins the ranks of the enemy and imposes upon him a cautious respect, but gives ever a phœnix-birth to successive galaxies of heroes. But to my tale.

Hattav and nine companions having determined "their pleasure in these reedy lands" (equally dangerous with those of Otterbourne of old) "some summer days to take," had approached the Kûban for that purpose; and after two days' hunting, in which they had killed and prepared for carriage thirty to forty elks, they had set forth for their sport on the third morning, when Hattav and a friend got separated from the rest, and soon after encountered a body of Russian military, consisting of about fifty infantry and three hundred cossacks, sent across the river (by portable boats) to capture the party. The two hunters were on foot, which put escape out of the question, and surrendering was for them as much so. While the enemy was at a distance, they retreated, firing from favouring localities upon the most venturous. The two officers of the troops then getting impatient at seeing their men fall, put themselves at the head of the cossacks, and advanced with them more rapidly; but both having been shot dead, the ardour of their followers cooled, and the infantry made a movement for surrounding the two hunters, who then placed themselves back to back, and loaded and fired by agreement alternately, bringing down a man at every shot. At length, however, their condition got so desperate from the expenditure of their ammunition, and one of them being severely wounded, that

he advised Hattav to attempt to escape; but this he refused to do, and after having fired their last shot, and kept the Russians for some time at bay, by feints, they were both captured, when Hattav, as being unwounded and still thought dangerous, was secured by cords, and both were carried into Russia, where they remained some months, until exchanged for three Russian prisoners. The clothes of both (Hattav kept his as a token of remembrance) were riddled by balls, only two of which took effect, in grazing the side and piercing the thigh of Hattav's friend; while of the Russians there were the two officers killed, and about fifteen soldiers killed and wounded. This wonderful display of the superiority of the rifle over the musket in such desultory fighting, and of the fear of such a body of Russians to come to close quarters with the sabres and daggers of two desperate Circassians, occupied several hours, having lasted from soon after the time the two friends left their couch among the reeds, in a spring morning, till near mid-day. I need scarce say that Hattav is a famed shot; he possesses, moreover, great strength and agility of body, and a very lively and energetic character.

I should tire you and perhaps myself too, in attempting to record all the heroes of whose prowess I have heard, yet I feel tempted to add to what I said of Osman of Tejaghuz in November last, that in the distressingly paralytic state in consequence of his fall in which he left me, he went directly to the field of battle and remained there, sharing in the warfare till the Russians evacuated the country; and that he has since—though little or no better—been on an

expedition against the cattle of the garrison of Doba, where in an encounter with the Russians he received a musket-ball in the shoulder, of which his comrades knew nothing till they had reached his home, where he mentioned his wound for the first time. I forbear to tell you particularly, though attested by numbers, how a slight and weak-looking man, Melish of Sûkwa, who is so lame and indisposed from an old wound, which gives him great and incessant pain, that he cannot move about but on horseback, rescued *alone*, during the last sortie of the Russians from Anapa, a woman and four girls from a party of forty to fifty cavalry, who had surprised their hamlets!

But I must give you a sketch of Mr. and Mrs. Hattav, my present host and hostess, who are a very estimable couple, and who afford the edifying spectacle of love and esteem having survived youth; the rareness of which occurs, as you may know, through people forgetting that effects spring from causes; and that, if the latter be not sown, the former cannot be reaped. In short, Mr. and Mrs. Hattav love and esteem each other, not only because they are man and wife, but because they each perform those things which produce love and esteem; he being a good Mussulman, a remarkably brave warrior, a kind husband, a most generous friend, a lively companion, and an active, industrious person, in both public and private affairs; and she a fond, dutiful, cheerful wife, and very clever housewife. I think they are among the best of the many good folks I have known in this country, therefore you must permit me to describe them a little. He is a very strongly, actively formed

man of about fifty-five, with a very determined and keen aspect, from which gleam out his pair of fiery, reddish eyes, from on each side of his large, thick, hooked nose, like two beacon-fires from on each side of a huge, bluff promontory. He is not a person with whom one may skirmish, even with the wits, in a slovenly manner; for his reply is often a sudden and mortal cut or stab; and his respect is for the point, fence and force, of what is said, and not for the person of him who utters it. He is precisely the sort of person with whom a home-spoiled fop of quality and wealth should be jostled, in order to rub off his plating, and make him show his real metal. But Hattav's keen sarcastic humour is blended and tempered with great and real kindness and good-nature, and dignified by self-respect.

His invitation of me had been very pressing, and of some weeks' standing; and he no sooner entered the guest-house, where I had arrived in his absence, than he caught me in his boa-constrictor arms, thrust his big nose in my face, and gave me a kiss on each cheek. Thank Mercury, this is not a common salutation among men here! He then went and turned his wife, notwithstanding my remonstrances, out of their best chamber, which has adjoining it the only comfortable room I know of in the whole country, being weather-tight—saving the window-holes, for which he begged paper coverings—and heated by a large earthen stove to about summer temperature, which in the present bitter weather is highly agreeable. Into this (not the stove) he forthwith inducted me, "scrip and scrippage," telling me it was hence-

forth mine; and his attention since is unwearied—keeping my room in order, trimming my pipe, keeping me company, and bidding me repeatedly tell what I choose to eat. He has also arranged for me parties for the shooting of ducks and of geese, with a stalking-horse; and he sent his nephew on horseback, a good day's journey, for a bit of leather I wanted for my coat. In respect of his nose, he says, it was swelled by a blow he received in the desperate fight he and another had when hunting the elk on the Kûban.

As for the lady, she is a stout, handsome, and very lively person of about forty; well dressed, in a showy silk robe, and long white muslin veil. She got introduced to me the first evening for doctorship, and came of herself the next one, sate herself on the couch beside me, and, taking my hand, told me she could not stay away, as I had made her in love with me, having cured her headache by merely feeling her pulse! So much for the efficacy of imagination. Now her visits are frequent, with or without her husband's presence, and she says: "Lay by your paper; you have written enough, and I come here to be merry." He tells me, in her presence, with a serio-comic expression, highly characteristic, that "women have a very small mind," and should never be consulted in important matters; and that, as he bought and paid well for "that one," it is her duty to serve and obey him in everything. Then she, in reply, catches his grizzled pate, and bows it—which never stooped to a foe—into her lap. A threat to buy a young wife is retaliated by him, which I repel by objections as to his personal beauty; and, by so

doing, incur the common penalty of those who interfere in such skirmishes, in having both man and wife attack me as to the heretical supposition that good looks should be at all deemed requisite on a man's part, provided he be brave. But his pride of her is shown by his telling me that he leaves her at liberty at all times, to kill a sheep, or even an ox, to regale visiters, in his absence; to entertain them, otherwise, with the best of everything; and to present any one with a bee-hive of honey, or what she thinks proper: and her pride of him by her telling me that, when the great Russian force was here, two years ago, instead of seeking safety, as most of her female neighbours did, she went *in high spirits*, to the brow of the neighbouring hill, to see him fight in the valley below. They have no progeny; but the parental yearnings seem solaced by the nephews and nieces who swarm ever in this cheerful domicile. Their young Polish serf declares that he has refound in them a father and mother—evidence of which kindness I have seen—and that living could not be better, as he has with the rest, meat, pastry, honey, &c., every day. Heaven grant them still a long lease of their plenty and content, unembittered by the domination of the Muscovite!

LETTER XXX.

MORE INTELLIGENCE REGARDING SUJUK-KALEH AND SUKUM-KALEH—BOAR-HUNTING IN THE VALLEY OF HATEKAI—A COUNCIL OF WAR—FRUSTRATION OF A PROJECTED ATTACK ON THE RUSSIAN FORTS —A SKIRMISH — RUMOURS — JOURNEY TO THE SOUTH—THE RUSSIAN FLEET RE-APPEARS OFF THE COAST—UNBROKEN SPIRIT OF THE CIRCASSIANS—MELI GOSH—AMBUSH FOR THE RUSSIANS AT TOAPSE —INTERVIEW BETWEEN MELI GOSH AND THE RUSSIAN GENERAL—THE RUSSIANS EFFECT A LANDING AT SUBESII—THE AZRAS—MILITARY OPERATIONS ON THE COAST.

OKHHOZ, *6th April.*

MY DEAR ——. I am here storm-staid, at the hamlet of Az-Demir, the envoy, whose wife has lodged me in a house within the family fence, near her own, and sent me word that I need not doubt her being both willing and able to entertain me well, notwithstanding her husband's absence. Since yesterday evening it has blown a very heavy gale of wind from the E.N.E., with a drift of sleet, making travelling, unless upon very urgent business, very unadvisable. Having none such business at present on hand, I am well pleased to make a halt, as I was but on my road to pay my farewell respects to the lady of Sefir Bey, by way of occupying the three days which the chief judge demanded being allowed him for meditation, and transcription of the declaration I deemed requisite as to the history of Sûjûk-kaleh. He came with

alacrity to see me on the subject, and entered upon it with lively interest; indeed too lively, for I found great difficulty in getting from him a patient hearing and consideration of the statement I had drawn up, as he rambled in long excursions over collateral recollections of small connexion with the main question, and instead of adopting my statement as I had expected, if his own recollection accorded, as it did entirely, with the information I had previously received from others, and condensed into something of a legal shape, he decided on drawing up another himself, saying I had been but imperfectly informed. Although his garrulity makes me fear his declaration may prove a treatise "*de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*," connected with time past, yet it afforded me two statements which may prove of some importance. First, that his brother who had behaved with great gallantry, and received twelve wounds at the last defence of Anapa (1811), was advised, in consequence, to petition the Turkish government for compensation, which was awarded him in a pension of 350 piasters per annum, from the dues of Turkish commerce at Anapa, and a like sum from those levied at Sûjûk-kaleh; that in consequence of the inadvertence of the minister in allocating half of the compensation on dues that did not exist, he was again advised to address a petition to the Sultan himself, which he did, and had immediately granted to him the whole of his pension from the dues of Anapa. You will thus see that Sûjûk-kaleh was in all probability at one period enrolled in the kûtûk (or volume of records) of the Turkish government; but it is still

more evident that at the period in question (1811 or 12), *if not for thirty years previously*, as is here affirmed, it had ceased to be a station of Turkish trade, and that the Russians had about as much equity on their side in taking a Turkish cession of Sûjûk-kaleh in 1829, as they would have had in taking a Genoese one of Sûkûkh, Vardan, Mamaï, or of any other of the many abandoned and ruined factory-forts of that quondam republic.

The second of his statements which I deem important was, that Sûkûm-kaleh was, as I have said, constructed by the same native chief as founded Sûjûk-kaleh, and *also Poti;* but that whereas Turkish officers have presided in the latter, none ever presided or served in the former, which, from first to last, was garrisoned, governed, and defended by the neighbouring Azras! If I can still effect my journey to the south, I shall make further inquiry on this important subject.

Hatekaï, 15th April.—In all this neighbourhood (where I have long resided) I am among the kindest, yet most respectful, of friends, whose regard for my comfort and predilections seems almost paramount to all considerations of a more general nature, making me feel assured that they will put the most favourable construction upon my conduct, and not judge it according to that strict scrutiny to which every action of us Englishmen has in general been subjected, as if it had been a duty incumbent on us never—even for a day—to indulge our mental or bodily energies by some temporary relaxation from the ponderous "cares of state." I have

ventured, therefore (among other similar recreations), to gratify my long-restrained desire to partake in a boar-hunt. To recruit a party for this purpose I addressed myself three days ago to Parakhosh, the nephew of my host, not only because I seemed to have made a favourable impression on his youthful and ardent fancy, as evinced by his frequent and gratuitous attendance upon me, and alacrity in the performance of whatever I required of him; but that he is one of those happiest of mortals, in "doing with his whole soul whatever his hand findeth to do;" and in having both mind and body thoroughly trained to a ready sacrifice of ease for duty—thus disarming both self-reproach and blame. This lively lad is moreover an enthusiast in all the more enterprising pursuits of his countrymen—the fight, the chase, and the horse-race; and all the accoutrements of both himself and his much-beloved and fleet-footed steed show, in their design and thorough state of repair, an entire acquaintance with the latest and best improvements in the two prime Circassian mysteries — arms and saddlery. To such a person it was but necessary to express my wish, leaving to him, in implicit faith, all detail.

Next morning, accordingly, he came betimes to announce that all was in readiness; when, having accoutred myself for strife with the mountain jungles and their savage inmates, my squire and his uncle slung on their rifles, called their dogs and set forth with me; other hunters being in advance awaiting us. Among these was the father of the youth, for all this family are prime and ardent wood-craftsmen.

The clear, silvery-hued April morning was enlivened by a fresh, but frosty and bracing breeze from the eastward; and, as our little party deployed across one of the lovely wooded parks of the valley, while the rambling dogs, by ever and anon pointing their noses to the well-known hill-forests before us, showed their instinctive participation in our design, I enjoyed all that delightful, yet indescribable, elasticity of spirit which such scenery, atmosphere, exercise, and pursuit best combine to produce; and which bestowed upon our enterprise—which, if reflected on, was but the killing of a hog or two—anticipations beyond what in reality it might have deserved. But such in fact is the nature of human happiness in its zenith—hope!

The valley of Hatekaï, which we now ascended, is one of the loveliest of this portion of the country. A clear and stony-bedded stream brawls through its centre in many a curvature, and towards its embouchure, on the statelier stream of the Bakhan; the whole space between the flanking ridges of hills is filled with the varied slopes of meadows of exuberant fertility, graced with numerous hamlets and "old patrician trees," grouped picturesquely or in single stateliness. And these hills, in perfect harmony with the scene beneath them, exhibit, that is those of the eastern side, forests of as stately growth, meadows of as rich production, and hamlets more densely congregated; while those towards Semez on the western side, shoot up in loftier and smooth green peaks from amid still denser forests, less varied by meadow or hamlet. Southward, the hills meet

and intermingle, and, clothed in dark masses of primeval woods, there close in the landscape. Towards this fountain-head of the chase we bent our steps, purposing, however, to explore the recesses of the western hill-woods upon our way. Already had we surmounted and toiled over two of these steep and tangled acclivities in vain—having seen nothing but the nightly furrowings—and some of us were prowling about the rugged brow of a third, while others explored the sides of the stream-chasm beneath, when an alarm was given, and instantly the short, firm-knit, grey-bearded father of my squire, who was nearest me, threw himself from tree to tree down the precipitous ravine beneath us in such reckless haste—as it seemed—that a spectator might have supposed he cared not about neck-breaking in seeking to avoid some death more painful. In the excitement of the moment I followed, but little more cautiously; and should certainly have arrived at the bottom in rags and tatters, had my woollens been of European fabric; as it was, my hands and legs had alone suffered laceration, proving my inferior skill to that of my unscathed friend, or that he, like the objects of our pursuit, was, in skin at least, of the genus *pakhydermata*. But the alarm proved false; for, instead of boars, we found only three old, weather-beaten hunters, whose well-tanned necks, chests, and faces bore strong evidence of their belonging also to the genus just specified. Our party being now in condition to undertake operations on a larger scale, and as we were now on the verge of the less frequented woods, where game might certainly

be expected, matters were arranged more scientifically. My squire and his uncle (equally active) were despatched with the dogs towards the top of the fourth steep hill that rose above us, to search the dense forest around its summit, while the seniors proceeded over its shoulder to take post at the opening of the next glen, and intercept the enemy, if he attempted escape in that direction. On our arrival there, being now a little jaded (at least I), we seated ourselves on some knolls to regale ourselves with the pipe, but had scarcely done so when a shot, followed instantly by a cry, made us start to our feet. I was nearest the glen and rushed, as I thought rapidly, up a deer track through its thickets; but grey-beard again passed me like an arrow, and then hearing sounds in the forest above, which he understood better, rushed as rapidly back again; while I imitated him as the raw recruit does the fugleman; and, in a moment more, I saw the cause of all these evolutions in an enormous black animal—certainly not much less than a highland cow, and far stronger—plunging desperately down the ravine above us, and driving aside the young trees in his way as if they had been but thistles. An inexperienced spectator might again have blundered in supposing that grey-beard was endeavouring to avoid so fearful an antagonist, who had besides the advantage of the descent: not at all, he but sought to intercept him; which, however, the boar prevented by a few still more desperate leaps, diagonally across our path, beneath which he was lost to view in the thick underwood of the bottom of the glen, before either of us could bring a

rifle to bear upon him. Running hard out of the wood for another peep at him, I was in view of the opening of the glen in about two minutes; yet, in this time, he had escaped out of sight over the shoulder of the next hill, and all I saw were the dogs toiling up the steep after him, but in vain, for they soon returned in such a resigned trot as seemed to express, "It is of no use." Alas! how many words it takes to describe—and that lamely—a scene of four or five minutes of intense excitement.

But the boar being irremediably escaped, we next warped ourselves by means of its trees up the steep he had descended, towards the spot whence the shot had sounded, and at length found young Parakhosh with an immense sow, which he had shot in the eye, lying dead before him, and the dogs all snapping at her, or starting away from her head as the tugging of one towards her tail gave the head motions like life. But mouthfuls of bristles were all that rewarded their increased confidence, till one more sagacious than the rest, discovered that the belly-skin was thinnest, when the sight became still more disagreeable, and I rose from the smoking conclave to leave it. Further *sport* was offered me, but I preferred returning homewards; for the dead sow had damped my spirits, especially as I learned that although only three others were at first in her company, they were surrounded by about a score of happy pigglings, some of which had probably been thus orphaned for my amusement. Any evidence, however, of sympathy for the swinish family was precluded by my recollection of the opposite and strong feelings on this sub-

ject of my Mussulman companions, the expression of whose features, while surveying the beset quarry, seemed as if they apprehended further contamination to the "unclean" dog from the still more "unclean" swine. Our canine associates were therefore called off, and the carcase left to the wolves.

21*st April.*—On the 9th instant I met the judge by appointment at a hamlet on the Semez hills, and received from him the declaration of which I have spoken, and which I think must be admitted to bear out fully what I have alleged as to the illegality of the Russian pretension to a right through cession to Sûjûk-kaleh, and, consequently, of the seizure of a British vessel come there to trade.

The possession of this important document, and the arrival of the time at which I calculated that the Russians might be expected to recommence their operations on the coast, and that my messenger for letters might be expected to return from Constantinople, had made me so impatient to proceed to the coast to the southward, where they might be looked for, and where I had given him a rendezvous, that I was about to set out, in spite of the wretched condition in which the roads were still said to be, of the general want of fodder, and of the long absence of any winds by which vessels from Turkey could arrive; when sleet and heavy rain again set in on the 14th, and partially the two following days, on the last of which I received a visit and intimation from Shamuz, which placed further impediment in the way of my departure. Having, as I stated before, been long convinced of the practicability of capturing the Russian

sod-walled forts by surprise during night, and for a long time past having heard reports of the great mortality which had occurred among the garrison of the new fort of Semez, I had continued taking every fit opportunity to counsel the persons of influence and fidelity to get up such an enterprise; but I had despaired of succeeding in getting it adopted in this part of the country, and had determined to proceed to the coast to the south, in hope of better success there. The old chief, however, came now to tell me, that he, Mensûr, and others, had been busy levying a force, and that in two days he should be enabled to indicate to me the place of general rendezvous, where my presence was desired. On the 18th I received this intimation, and consequently proceeded next day to the vale of Anapa, where I found the base of a large hill occupied by numerous congregations of horse and foot, further arrivals of which swelled the force to perhaps about three thousand men.

Soon after my arrival the two chiefs I have mentioned, and other leaders, removed into the oblong square of densely crowded warriors, who had gathered around me; and after a short preliminary from me, the debate began upon the merits of two enterprises, for the successful conduct of which secret measures had been taken previously by the employment of spies to procure information regarding the condition of the places which were the objects of the contemplated attack, and the placing of guards around them to prevent information of what was designed being conveyed to the enemy. First, Shamuz in a well-set short speech

set forth the advantages of capturing the fort near Sûjûk-kaleh, as that locality had fame abroad, and a successful enterprise there would gain them credit in England and Turkey; and then one of the spies he had employed—Hatti Ismael, an old man of approved fidelity and courage, and *atalik* of one of his sons—detailed minutely what he had seen on a visit to the fort, under pretence of seeking a deserted slave. But his evidence rather broke down as a recommendation of the exploit, for he was obliged to own that the ditch, although much damaged by rain, was nearly twelve feet deep (or the height of two men as he said), and the wall—formed of a double row of stakes with earth filled in between them—nearly half as high; while of the two passages into the fort, one would admit of only two men abreast, and the other of only one. In addition to these circumstances I may mention that within the fort, as in those of Toapse and others, is a sort of square citadel of earth—a blockhouse with thickly placed loop-holes for musketry; so that the garrison, although reduced—as was said—might, unless completely surprised, cause great carnage among their assailants.

Mensûr, who, I suspect, was originally more in favour of an attack upon the colonial fort, and who was no doubt aware of how much these discouragements might operate upon the auditory, took advantage of them in the lively address he then delivered, as reasons for *altering* his opinion in favour of an attack upon the Semez fort, and making him recommend the other enterprise, with the practicability of which he described them as all well acquainted, many

individuals having approached the colonial walls by night, and ascertained the ease with which they might be scaled. Jambolet, a very brave warrior from Shapsuk—of which province there were a great many present—next made a very sensible address upon the benefits of unanimity and submission to the direction of leaders of approved merit; after which a proposition was made for the seniors to go apart, and decide upon the merits of the two undertakings; but this was overruled by a somewhat uncivil cry for publicity of discussion, which however was rendered unnecessary by the general opinion appearing to side with the recommendation of Mensûr.

The assemblage around me was then dissolved, and another semicircular one was formed further down, with a mollah in front who said prayers, after which Mensûr uttered, from most stentorian lungs, an energetic appeal to the "faithful," at the close of which the whole mass of us set forth across the valley for the locality at the foot of the hills toward the south-west, where it had been determined to bivouack till the hour of attack had arrived.

Quarters were assigned to me in the last inhabited hamlet in the direction of the colony-fort, and about a couple of hours' distance from it, where, as may be supposed, but little luxury of any kind was to be found, and no bedding. One of my escort, Thleptatsh, my host here, a very brave and estimable person, was very unwell with rheumatic fever, on which account I begged him and the rest to remain with me, promising to start with them in good time for being present at the onset. Through fear of failure

in this promise I slept but little, and, as between two and three o'clock I sat debating with myself about arousing the invalid, his nephew, a lad of fourteen and of great liveliness and courage, sprung from his sleep as if stung, and with a look of such entreaty begged for setting forth, that I allowed him to awake the rest. In a few minutes more we were all in the saddle, and on our way at a rapid trot.

As we approached the great field of muster, a thin cloud of smoke from its numerous watch-fires hung over it, and a denser one rose over an eminence to the west, in the direction of the colony; but many straggling parties of warriors on foot gave indication of nothing being in hand; and on arrival among the innumerable parties, many of whom still lolled on their grassy couches on the muster ground, we soon learned that the scouts around the colony had given intimation of the enterprise having been balked (no doubt through treachery) by the enemy being completely on his guard; great fires having been kept blazing around the walls all night, which showed without and within the walls strong corps of infantry standing to their arms during all that time. Besides such preparation, the place is seated on a slight yet commanding eminence; it contains from one hundred and fifty to two hundred houses, mills, &c., and is fortified by sixteen pieces of cannon. It may therefore be conceived that any open attack must have been attended with great slaughter among the assailants; I wished therefore the exploit to be considered at an end, and after having made an excursion to a great *moghilah*, or barrow, which gave

a good view of the position of the enemy, I returned to the field, and, while receiving the numerous salutations of my friends, took opportunity to console the most influential among them by combining, with my regrets at the failure of their enterprise, an expression of entire satisfaction with the disposition exhibited by so large a force.

An auxiliary force from Semez and Ozerek, headed by the chief judge, had joined the main body the preceding evening, making the whole upwards of four thousand men, and they brought word that the garrison of the fort at Semez had also apparently got word of their intentions, reinforcements having arrived by sea from Doba and Ghelinjík, and been stationed (in about thirty tents around the walls) close under the guns. I would therefore fain have had nothing further attempted at the time, and after having attended an excellent horse-race, in which one of my steeds shared, and having found that that energetic chief Mensûr had very different views from mine—for he had been arguing all morning upon the necessity of something being done, and was now surrounded by a great throng, to whom he was delivering a spirited address to that purport—I determined on departing, lest my presence might give weight to measures which I thought then highly inexpedient. I did so accordingly, towards noon. Next forenoon, however, two deputies from the army arrived here, and having procured the attendance of my host and others *as witnesses*, they communicated to me the cause of their embassage; viz. that upon my departure having become generally known, and

my having gone accompanied by an individual with whom I had formerly sojourned on the coast to the southward, great and general discontent had been expressed on the supposition that I was about to leave the country, in which case, it was said, I must have lost hopes, and (so it was stated to me) it would be needless for them to entertain any. This was the chief burthen of the message; and it was accompanied with an assurance that Shamuz had been empowered and had undertaken to provide everything that could contribute to my comfort. I learned also subsequently that the judge had been reproached that he, as being "book-learned," and acquainted with foreign modes of politeness, had not exerted himself more to procure my stay. But I must remind you of what great jealousy the chiefs of these parts have always shown in regard to my being associated with any but themselves, and that this feeling may have influenced the composition of the message sent to me. Since, however, the project against the forts has been betrayed in this neighbourhood, I must again make trial of it elsewhere.

After the despatch of these messengers, the army, having previously foraged for their horses in the neighbouring hamlets, set forth towards the line of small forts between Anapa and Jamatia*, in the hope of achieving something before its dispersion. Between these two fortresses there are four forts—two near the sea, and two a little more inland—forming a line of

* A large fortress on the left bank of the southern embouchure of the Kûban.

communication and protection for the supplying of Anapa by land with necessaries from beyond the Kûban. Towards, but at some distance from this line, the Circassian force had halted for a council of war, in which some were still engaged, and others at their afternoon prayers, when repeated discharges of cannon were heard in the direction of two of the forts. All instantly mounted and set forth at a gallop, some in the direction of one of these forts; others toward another; while Mensûr, it would appear, and the rest took a medium course, which soon brought them in sight of a most desperate conflict between a small party of their countrymen—under a hundred, it is said—and a strong detachment of Russians, with several pieces of artillery; a rampart in front of about one hundred and thirty loaded carts, and the deep sand of the sea as a defence behind, while the two forts which were within cannon range of the locality kept firing on the flanks of the Circassians as they presented themselves disengaged from their opponents. What the number of the latter might be I cannot learn, but they had been observed marching in five divisions, escorting stores between the two forts; which intelligence having been communicated to some young stragglers around the Circassian army, they had instantly — first one and then others — galloped off in the direction indicated, without communicating with the main body, each ambitious of the glory of being first in the charge.

They were received with discharges of musketry and artillery, yet never fired a shot themselves; but drawing their sabres, rushed amid the ranks, wherever

they could find openings through the rampart of carts. Thrice they penetrated this, and thrice were repulsed: their leader Noghaï of Godowhaï—a person of most gallant presence and great fame for enterprise and courage (whom I had seen at the first general muster)—was shot dead in the first charge; another was literally blown to atoms from the mouth of one of the cannons, and Arslan Gheri—a noble of more gentle aspect, yet equal daring—was felled to the ground by a stroke on the temple with the butt of a sponging-rod. Besides these, nine or ten others were killed or dangerously wounded, and thrice that number otherwise disabled, yet the conflict was being continued as fiercely as ever, when Mensûr luckily arrived, and though thrice unhorsed in the *mêlée*, he at length succeeded in calling off his young blood-hounds, whose entire destruction could not have been otherwise prevented, as two columns of infantry were by this time in rapid advance from the forts; and to have attempted a rescue by bringing up a stronger force of Circassians would have been highly imprudent, exposed, as it must have been, on level ground to the fire of artillery from several directions.

To lose in battle one's bonnet or any notable article of accoutrement is as great disgrace here now, as it was anciently to leave behind one's shield; and thus a youth of this neighbourhood is spoken of with praise, for having, when his horse was shot under him, kept the bayonetted Russians around him at bay with his sabre, until he had unstrapped his saddle; when he cut his way out from among them, and bore it off in triumph.

The Circassians here have thus themselves commenced the *twelfth* campaign; and although the opening is but partial, it is sufficiently characteristic to prove that the spirit of the people is still erect. To do all that in me lies to sustain that spirit until I receive further advices, I judged it better, instead of adopting the arrangements made between the two messengers from the army and my present host, for sending my reply to the judge and Shamuz, to see these individuals again myself, to explain to them clearly my reasons for proceeding to the coast to the southward at present, and to have a letter to that purport addressed to the people.

Shamuz had not yet returned home; but the judge I found newly arrived, and, as I expected, greatly fatigued with the exertions of the three previous days, and their sleepless nights of bivouacking —for he, too, had been present latterly at the affair on the coast, in which his very gentle young son had behaved with much gallantry. Notwithstanding his fatigue, however, he argued stoutly against my departure, and in his final acquiescence, he appeared quite of the character of one "convinced against his will." Yet he promised, without having them committed to a letter, to communicate to the rest the reasons I assigned for my procedure.

It may be conceived, though I am sure inadequately, under what painful anxiety I still labour, not only as to the choice of means by which I may serve, and if possible save this country, but far more as regards the responsibility of contributing, and that in no little degree, to protract the contest to an

extremity possibly prejudicial to the Circassians. I can only reply that if I be deceiving them with hope of eventual success, it is because I myself have been deceived in this respect by my letters from England. Two late events have, however, given some countenance to that hope. The individual who brought my last letters—a merchant highly respected—argued strongly against the despatch of the envoy I recommended last month as trouble and expense quite superfluous, because the salvation of the country was on the point of being achieved. Another individual resident in the neighbourhood of Anapa, and said to be possessed of great sagacity, was lately in some of the provinces to the east, on the frontiers of which he had an interview with Major Tausch, (whom many of the Circassians, as I said, believe to be friendly to them,) and who in answer to the anxious inquiries of the former, as to whether it were expedient for him to cultivate his farm this season, as it lies in a situation so exposed to hostilities, replied to this effect; "Certainly, as your country will, within a very short time, be either wholly abandoned to, or wholly abandoned by, Russia"—referring, as was understood, to negotiations now in progress elsewhere. Besides these incidents there are numerous reports; some favourable to our hopes, and others adverse. The latter consist chiefly in accounts of Russian preparations for another campaign. Among the former was the report of a late deserter, mentioned to me by the judge; viz. that an ambassador at St. Petersburg had demanded the cessation of the war here, and

upon having received an unfavourable answer, had immediately left the capital. I own that I have long since ceased placing much dependence on anything favourable to the country but what my letters contain; and among the items of this nature contained in them, I place foremost the account of the great force England has been compelled to send into Persia, caused as that measure was by Russian machinations, and strongly inclined to hope, as I now am, that England cannot, after such evidence, remain doubtful as to the justice and expediency of striking *here* nearer the root of Russian pretension. Among Circassians, also, this Persian war—especially since they have come to know that England is a party in it—has formed one of their brightest allurements to persevere in their struggle; for they feel convinced that England—whom they now regard as their ally against a common enemy—will not be unmindful of the benefit derived from their having so far weakened him. And this war has long been a subject of great and general interest; for the reports of the deserters, for many months past, have all concurred in stating that great detachments of troops were being sent into Persia to fight, as these soldiers had been told, *the white Arabs*—alias our sepoys.

Khissa, 13th May.—On the 24th of last month I at length effected my departure for this part of the coast; but was detained in the neighbourhood of Pshat for more than a week, by the unwillingness of the people to hire me two horses till the grass was a little grown, the necessity of which I soon experienced, all the hay having been long since consumed every-

where. Nor was I greatly impatient under the delay; as having sent Luca on the 26th to Hapetaï to learn what news might have been brought by a vessel just arrived there, its captain assured him in the most solemn manner, that when at Constantinople, some ten days previously, Mehmet, an elderly Turkish merchant of my acquaintance, had shown him an English vessel which he said was about to proceed to the coast of Circassia with a cargo of salt for me, as an experiment towards opening the trade; and that he purposed sailing by her. On the other hand, next day about fifty cannon reports were heard sea-ward, and three days afterwards seven men-of-war were seen standing to the south, along the coast. The symptoms of war overcast the hopes the Turkish captain had lighted up, so that I had almost lost sight of them, when, on my arrival at Shepse on the 9th instant, I met four Turkish merchants (some of them known to Luca as respectable) who had just arrived by another vessel in that neighbourhood, one of whom, during the two days I remained in the same hamlet with them, also solemnly and repeatedly averred that while he was at Constantinople, an English doctor, with others, repeatedly came to the Topkhana Coffee-house, and solicited him, and others, to embark with their goods on board *three* or *four* English vessels, which they said were about to be sent me, and by which there would be entire security for both person and property against all dangers from the Russians: that my messenger, Hadji Ismael, with letters, was to have sailed by one of them, but that it had been subsequently so generally reported

that the Russians had succeeded in inducing the Circassians, by a bribe of 4000 rubles, to murder both me and my dragoman, (the theme at that time, my informant said, of every village on the Asiatic coast), that the Hadji had been despatched to Sinab to sail thence by a Turkish craft, and learn if the report were true (!) and that he might therefore be hourly expected. For three days I was at liberty to indulge in the fancies these averments were calculated to create; but, on the fourth, they were again overshadowed by the semblance of war; for on approaching Waïa, I found anchored close off it two large steamers and five gun-boats, which, from time to time, kept firing on the long level tract at the mouth of its stream, giving me to apprehend that we should have to make a *détour* by the hills. The firing ceased, however, on the arrival of a corvette, and fortunately was not resumed, for some of the Circassians there assembled called us to a parley, which lasted about half an hour, right abreast of the little flotilla. It proceeded sea-ward, however, soon after, making me hope that any design of landing there had been abandoned for the present at least. But we were still on our way for quarters for the evening, when, in ascending the valley of Shakhe, the war-cry with its accompanying pistol-firing resounded from a hill to our left, and was immediately thereafter responded to by the issuing of small parties of men fully armed from the hamlets in every direction. We soon learned that this alarm was created by a much larger naval force; viz. nineteen vessels in all, having appeared off Waïa, which seemed thus doomed to

bear the curse of a fort. The people I have as yet met hereabouts look very gloomily on this renewal of their misfortunes, all except a band of gallant cavaliers I met going to the aid of the Waïans, who appeared as jocund as if a horse-race or tournament were in hand. I have now but little spirit left for the comfort of others; for I have sickened under the deferred hopes of action in England, and the sultan's government is doing its best to extinguish the contest here, for it has strictly embargoed the trade along the whole Asiatic coast, so that no vessel can sail but in secret. That which came here was but a large boat, and it had departed, even with the wind foul, before my arrival. Another of a similar description, quite a god-send for me, arrived last night at Sûkûkh, close to Waïa, having passed the Russian squadron in the dark, and I have sent Luca to get its news; to parley for passage hereafter, and to counsel its further removal from the enemy. Unless another offer I cannot permit this opportunity to escape me, and if the country be sacrificed through my departure, no one can now say it was my fault. As for the twice-repeated report of English vessels coming for me, I am now forced to conclude that it was based on some fallacy, or that the matter is in the hands of persons little fit for the management of such an undertaking; otherwise they would not have intermitted proceedings, and sacrificed time of such infinite value, on the getting up of a tale of murder, which they might easily have conceived to be but a Russian *ruse*.

The fort of Shapsekwa, like all the rest, is com-

pletely commanded by the neighbouring hills, and when I passed it on the 5th, a muster was being made to fire into it, with a cannon belonging to a noble of Jûbghe. This is constantly done by the fort at Sashe, and on my journey I had further proof of the continued buoyancy of the spirit of the people in a neighbourhood where I least expected it.

At Toapse I spent two days with Meli Gosh, a noble of very fascinating character and deportment, to which his travel—not foreign, but through most of this country as far as the Caspian Sea and Tiflis—may have contributed. Although he has lost successively two wives, his brother, a most estimable person, (in the contest at Tshopsin,) and twenty to thirty other near relatives by this war, and although he has been suffering now for nearly a year, and still suffers great pain from a gun-shot wound at the top of the knee-cap, he is still full of enterprise, spirit, and even liveliness. The hamlet in which he lodges and received me is little more than a cannon-shot distance from the fort; but a low ridge of hills intervenes, from one of which I had a leisurely survey of its works, at about musket-shot distance from them. Another walk down a little valley of deserted hamlets towards the sea, gave a satisfactory inspection of the military defences, &c. in that direction. And these excursions I felt at liberty to take alone, as I had heard of no fighting in that district for a considerable time. I was told moreover of a sort of truce having been called aloud for by the interpreter of the fort who had civilly proposed that the Russians should be allowed to cultivate some herbs

around the walls, while he promised on their part to leave the natives unmolested in their tillage of the rest of the valley. Although I believed my host no way inclined to this "hollow truce," I could not forbear speaking to him against it, as likely to be productive of treachery and other bad consequences; to which he made little reply beyond some remarks upon the stupidity of the people of the district, (excepting himself, and a few others, none of them are Mussulmans,) having a more convincing answer then in preparation.

On returning from my last walk I had observed a party of horsemen—a dozen or fifteen—with their horses tethered, a fire lighted, and evidently preparing to bivouack for the night at the entrance of our little glen; an incident by no means rare now-a-days, when a party happens to halt for the night in the vicinity of any of the forts where the hamlets are deserted. Two very gallant-looking nobles, who were lodged at our guest-house, seemed to be in connexion with this party; and my Georgian, who holds himself now greatly *au fait* in the usage of this country, prophesied that one of them was about to carry off a young lady in marriage, which feat is often performed with a considerable escort. The looks of placid expectancy I saw, or thought I saw, I therefore tractably construed as had been suggested. Towards nightfall, he who was said to be the would-be "Benedick" absented himself; and his companion, after having reclined, in his clothes, on the end of one of our couches, till about midnight, also quietly withdrew. I followed them ideally so far in

the exploit, and then forgot them in the sound repose which is my usual reward for a little pedestrian toil on the hills. About daybreak, however, I was aroused by cannon and musket-firing; but while hurriedly dressing to sally forth and see the cause, it had ceased. First another individual, and then my lame host, arrived from the scene of action; and, in process of time, a full explanation was forthcoming.

Mehli Gosh, scandalised by the tranquillity the *Ghiaours* had been permitted to enjoy, and having observed a practice they had adopted, of marching out a party in the morning, to be stationed as sentries around the walls of the fort (probably as introductory to the proposed gardening), had invited some of his friends from a distance (for the sake of secrecy) to aid in surprising them. For this purpose they concealed themselves during the night among some furze and brushwood, within about two-thirds of a musket-shot from the walls, and were thus enabled to surprise completely a party of about a dozen soldiers, five of whom they shot dead, and they would have killed or captured more, but from the slipperiness of an acclivity which prevented them overtaking the Russians before they regained the fort-gate. They had, therefore, to content themselves with the arms and clothes of the five, the boots of one of whom my host politely tendered me; but the sight of them —perhaps still warm—was quite enough for my civilian stomach.

Luca called this chief quite an Englishman, and he could really scarce pay Englishmen a greater compliment; for, among the most prominent charac-

teristics of Meli Gosh appear sincerity and frankness; and that sort of confidence of manner which results from native mental wealth and still more from habitual integrity, is in him charmingly harmonised with urbanity, with kindness and with great sprightliness of imagination. He amused me much with a lively account of an interview with the Russian military and naval commanders which he was honoured with last year, when a landing was effected in this district. His mission to head-quarters was for the exchange of prisoners or dead; but the general took advantage of it to endeavour to make him a partisan; and not content with the usual themes of Russia's power, Turkey's friendship, or subserviency, and the comparative insignificance of England, and all the other nations; the magnanimity of the Emperor, and the merciful and even friendly disposition of himself, the general; he sought to fascinate and enthral the imagination of Mehli, which he perhaps perceived to be above the ordinary level, with such objects as he thought suited to tell upon the mind of a "barbarian Asiatic *." Among these I must rank first the admiral (Lazareff, I presume, whom Mehli describes as the most enormously fat person he ever saw), dressed in a showy silken *anteri*, superbly laced, and whose part it was to stand mutely and modestly by, while the general made his eulogy, as an "ocean warrior," who had oft "braved the battle and the breeze"; had gained the knowledge of his profession in the very service of "these boasted English," and was now

* The moral, not the geographical classification is here alluded to.

quite prepared to meet and to chastise any of them who might presume to enter the Black Sea! Then were introduced, in contrast to each other, an immense loaf of bread, of almost snowy whiteness, with the top of a loaf of still whiter sugar stuck in the centre of it, and an enormous bombshell, his choice of which (no doubt as emblematic of peace or war) Meli was invited to make, and was told, moreover, that, if peace were accepted of, such bread and sugar would always be at their command. To this Mehli replied he would not accept of either; but of the two would infinitely prefer the iron ball, and that the general would confer a great favour if he would fire upon their fields a thousand or two every day, as he had done at first, as iron was of great use to them, and they had no fear of having it bestowed in that manner; for their religion told them that no one died but by the appointment of God, and thus it was as impossible to kill any one before his decreed term, as for him to avoid it when arrived. As for the bread, he told the general he might see on the sides of all the hills how extensive was the cultivation of the country, which yielded them the food they preferred, and all they required; and that as every, even the poorest, hamlet had ten or a dozen hives of honey, his sugar could form no temptation to any one.

These offers having thus been rejected, some silver roubles were next proposed, but met the same fate; when the intractable Mehli was invited to state any benefit he might choose to receive at the hands of the general. He begged accordingly that the army might be re-embarked and withdrawn from their coast;

to which proposition an exposition of the immutability of the will of the Emperor was the general's reply; and thus, with a lecture from that honey-tongued pandar, Major Tausch, upon the propriety of Mehli's moderating the warmth of his speech in the presence of such august personages, the levee closed.

One cannot but smile to see "the fantastic tricks" of superiority these minions of the fortune of war; these titled slaves, who "live, move, and have their being" but by the beams of imperial favour shed upon them, attempt to play upon individuals whose right to think and act for themselves has descended from an ancestry immemoriably free; and whose thoughts and actions have of late displayed such genuine nobility. But they are barbarians in the eyes of the Russian "magnificos," because they prefer "a hollow tree, a crust of bread, and liberty," to gilded chains, with white bread and refined sugar!

21*st.*—The appearance of the Russians off Waïa was but a *ruse*, or the depth of water there was found by the steamers not such as line-of-battle ships could be moored in sufficiently near the shore to aid a debarkation by bombardment; therefore the mouth of the Shakhe (or Sûbesh), which has that advantage in an eminent degree, was preferred. On the morning of the 15th, the wind being light and westerly, the whole naval force—consisting of six ships-of-the-line, four frigates, or corvettes, the two steamers, and sixteen brigs and smaller vessels—appeared off the latter échelle. So soon as the larger vessels had been ranged sufficiently near the shore—that is, at at about half cannon-shot distance—a hot bombard-

ment of the level opening of the valley was begun. The Circassian force, which had removed thither from Waïa, was considerable; but it was soon found that the nearness to which the large ships were enabled to approach was such as would have caused a frightful loss of men in the ditches which had been prepared for the defence of the place, and many of which, moreover, were at the time still filled with rain-water. The Circassians therefore stationed themselves behind such eminences near the shore as afforded shelter from the cannons and shells of the shipping; and thus they awaited the landing of the troops. But as the cannons swept the whole of the level and broad valley of the stream, their force became necessarily divided; so that when at length the shore appeared sufficiently clear to admit of the numerous boats attending the squadron being put off for the base of a small hill on the northern side of the valley, those Circassians only who had been stationed there were at hand to attack them, which, however, utterly disproportioned as their force was, they did not hesitate to do. Twice they charged down the hill with furious impetuosity, endeavouring to capture some of the smaller pieces of artillery, around which was the chief struggle; and twice they were repulsed with great slaughter, from the dense and rapidly augmenting fire of musketry and artillery, which killed or severely wounded all those who had formed the charging force; whose horses, tethered behind the hill, were there captured, and immediately bayonetted by the Russians.

In this gallant but futile action I have again to

deplore the loss of some of the very choicest spirits of this part of the country, among whom were about fifty of its bravest nobles. Arslan-bí, one of these of whom I have already spoken as having shared in the exploit at Toapse, who always showed great attachment to us English, and from whom my countryman Nadir Bey received most liberal hospitality, threw aside his rifle, when the landing was effected, and drawing his sabre, was heard to exclaim; "God, sooner or later, I must, I know, die—grant me that death now!" when, with his brother who accompanied him, he rushed amid the troops, and both fell pierced by numerous bayonets. This is but an instance of what many others then performed. Another young man of this neighbourhood deliberately stripped to his anteri and trousers, and having laid aside all his arms but his sabre, he *thrice* charged with it, and cut his way through the soldiers without having received a wound.

This Russian force (which Hassan Bey learned at Sûkûm to be about twelve thousand men), soon after the completion of its landing with its numerous artillery, gained entire possession of the little hill, of a larger one immediately behind, and of the portion of the valley which they command. The Circassians, who did not amount perhaps to more than a sixth part of their enemies, limited their exertions to circumscribing the Russians as much as possible. In the evening, we had here sad proof of the horrors of war in the wailing wake-cry for the dead from the hills in every direction around. Two double-wounded patients in one hamlet (that of the late valiant Dessi

Dunakhaï, which had one killed and two wounded last year) were forthwith put under my charge, and the application for medicines and advice for others were, as usual, oppressively numerous. Within three days after the debarkation, the larger vessels set sail again, taking with them fully more than half of the army; wherefore, we suppose that some other exploit is in immediate preparation.

The Azras behind Sûkûm-kaleh continue to carry on war with the Russians on that coast, and with those of their countrymen who have made peace with them. They have just made a great and successful foray upon the cattle of the latter; and a still more disastrous one, in which a large village near the coast was surprised by night, and about seventy of its women and children borne off, was made last winter by the people on this side of Gaghra. This exploit serves as a good exemplification of the extreme hardihood and power of endurance of the mountaineers of this neighbourhood, whom an elderly Russian soldier of much experience in warfare and its hardships through many climes and countries, declares he never knew at all equalled in these respects by any people whatever.

Towards the end of last January eleven hundred volunteers assembled in the valley of Shanda, and proceeded eastward to cross the central range of mountains *, where it is less high than the rest, but where

* The height of these mountains may be judged of by their remaining covered with snow, nearly half way down, generally until the month of September, and sometimes, more or less, throughout the entire year. They are very rugged in form.

the pathways are yet so precipitous, intricate, and obstructed with forests, rocks, and deep snow, as to be utterly impassable but on foot, and a light equipment of clothes, &c., is absolutely indispensable. About half of the force had provided themselves with snow-shoes (exactly such as those used in Norway and Canada), which enabled them to keep a day's march in advance of the rest, for fear of surprise. The Azras in the lower country, towards Sûkûm, live in villages, upon one of which the force in question came so suddenly and unexpectedly during the night, that it was enabled to capture (as is believed) the whole female and younger population, for whom, as the mountain track was quite impracticable for them, there was no other means of conveyance than carriage on men's shoulders, and no comfort but the huge fires lighted by night, which made so many deep wells amid the snow of their bivouack before morning. This expedition took about a fortnight in the execution, during which time there was no shelter for any one but such as the felt cloak he might carry afforded, and few or none had fur pelisses, as being cumbersome.

This sort of warfare is generally to be deplored, yet I can scarce speak to the people here against it, as these Sûkûm-kaleh Azras (or Psibés) formed auxiliaries (by compulsion however perhaps) of the Russian force that invaded this coast last year, on which account solely the expedition in question was undertaken. In the invading army of this year, neither Azras nor Georgians have yet been observed.

Hassan Bey, my present host, has since redeemed one of those captives—the wife of a noble of high

rank—for between 500 and 600 pieces of merchandise, and sent her home in charge of some of his most intimate friends. I hope the rest may in time be similarly restored to their homes.

28th.—The Circassians, nothing daunted by their loss on the 15th (that of the Russians was however probably at least as great), and eager to have another encounter with their invaders, transported their single small piece of cannon (about a four-pounder) to Shakhe; and the day before yesterday, having placed it on a hill, which commands the position of the Russians, they made a subscription of their small stocks of powder, and fired about thirty shots right into the camp, in the hope of inducing or forcing the Russians to advance from amid their heavy artillery and fight with them. The latter however were not so complaisant, although their general, upon learning or perceiving what was intended, had sent word that if a single shot were fired, he would advance with his whole force right against the cannon and cut to pieces all those about it. Instead of doing so he remained pertinaciously in his camp, replying to the Circassian cannon with an enormous but harmless discharge of his own, as well as of those of the shipping in the bay. To his message the Circassians had replied, that such an advance was precisely the object they had in view.

The Russian Commander-in-chief, or rather his successor, at Sûbesh (for the former set sail soon after in a steamer), will be afforded another opportunity of putting his threat in execution; for a larger subscription is in process for another cannonade.

LETTER XXXI.

STATE OF MATTERS IN BESNI—TRADITIONS—EXCURSION TO HAMISH—ARDUWHATSH (ARDLER)—LITERATURE — PERMISSION GRANTED TO RUSSIA TO CONSTRUCT A ROAD ACROSS ASIA MINOR—JUDICIAL ESTABLISHMENTS PROJECTED BY THE SOUTHERN CIRCASSIANS — A FEUD STANCHED — BARZEK HADJI DAKHUM-OKU—RUSSIAN SUBORNATION OF MURDER—EXCURSION INTO THE COUNTRY OF THE AZRAS — ORATORY — PHILOLOGY — PROGRESS OF CIRCASSIAN ORGANISATION — SUKUM-KALEH — A CIRCASSIAN CIRCUIT.

KHISSA, 31*st May.*

MY DEAR ——. I have had sundry interviews with the chiefs of these parts of late, and am sorry to find, contrary to my expectation, that fully as much importance is attached to my stay in the country by the people here as by those of the north; and I am thus most urgently and perplexingly persecuted to prolong it, notwithstanding all the endeavours I have used to set before them the probability that my presence at Constantinople may now, that the trade is so effectually obstructed, be of more real benefit to the country. Nor is it in these two warring provinces alone that my presence sustains hope; for three deputies (one of whom fell in the action of the 15th) have been sent here from Besni, who in consequence of its having been known in their province that I still remained in the country, and of the

hope thence arising that this portion at least might be maintained in independence through the intervention of England, have been sent to make particular inquiry on this subject, because the Russians are beginning to let the weight of their yoke be felt in these eastern provinces; and in particular are forcibly possessing themselves of hostages to secure the permanent submission of the people. For these reasons many are desirous of obtaining refuge here, where they still hope to live in freedom. Along the frontier of their province, towards Abazak, Sass has placed videttes, to prevent all communication; and he has of late made two incursions into the latter province. In the first of these having, with a body of cavalry, surprised and killed the three sentinels of a plain, he swept it of about fifteen hundred brood mares and three thousand sheep. The second was undertaken in consequence of compliance being refused with a demand he had made for the families and effects of two Abbats and an Armenian who wished to remove within the Russian jurisdiction. He advanced therefore with a considerable force of infantry and artillery; and after some hard fighting succeeded in part in accomplishing his object, the country there being open and but little defensible.

I have not lost sight of the project of storming the Russian forts by night; but the people are not at present in such a humour as to make it expedient to broach the subject: nor is the season suitable, the nights being much too short and clear. If however I remain in the country, I will select fitting opportunities to make converts to my views, and to

get preparation otherwise made, as the longer nights approach, to carry them into execution. Meantime I purpose turning the attention of the chiefs—in the intervals of war—to further administration of the national oath and some other measures of general benefit for keeping the community in strength and order—particularly one for superseding the occasional judicial congresses by permanent establishments.

4th June.—I have often been told of an animal frequenting the sea on the coast between Toapse and Agûïa, in a deep cavern of the rocks of which it is said to harbour, and which Hassan Bey says he has entered in pursuit of it, but unsuccessfully. One of the species was shot, but it sank immediately. It is supposed to prey upon fish (there very abundant) and is called a sea-bear, not being the seal which is well known on the coast. But a still stranger story has just been told me of a monster which came from the sea, having been killed by the ancestor of a noble family (Magû) at Sûbesh, in reward for which service the dues of commerce of that and the two neighbouring échelles were conferred upon it in perpetuity. There are two traditionary versions of the tale, one of which is, that Magû drove a fierce young bull beneath an oak (which was long preserved in memory of the feat, and whose withered trunk was but lately burned), and while the monster was engaged in fight with it, he sprung upon it and cut it to pieces with his keen sabre. A description of the monster is not now to be had, yet two things are certain—that the Magû family alone still receives, and is allowed most scrupulously, the dues in question, contrary to the usage on all the rest of

the coast; and that the sole reason assigned for the privilege is the one I have narrated.

14*th*.—On the 6th, I made an excursion to the southward, to see two vessels, by one of which I purpose sailing, and shall now recount my gleanings. Both vessels I found snugly ensconced in one of the little streams of Hamish, which, as well as its neighbour, is remarkable for its dirty whitish tinge, fetid smell, and an oily appearance on the surface, which make me think that naphtha must ooze into them.

Hassan Bey—fond of retasting the practices of his youth—proposed bivouacking with the crews in the thicket by the stream, and in order to eke out our luxuries he sent to the hamlet of the brother-in-law of his brother, the Pasha, to demand provisions. These were sent immediately in abundance; viz. two fat sheep, a lamb, wine, spirits, &c., with which about midnight an abundant supper was furnished. After our jovial and much-prolonged repast, stretched on a mat (bedded on that unsavoury fern), and with my head pillowed on a saddle, I spent the few hours till dawn chiefly in gazing on the beauties of the night and of our picturesque bivouack; and in occasionally enlivening the latter with the imagined adjunct of our being pounced upon by a body of the southern Azras; hurried on board ship, and borne off to Sûkûm-kaleh, as had happened but a few nights before to twelve persons, the inhabitants of a neighbouring hamlet, who were thus captured in revenge for the foray of last winter, and in accordance with a threat the prince of Sûkûm made in consequence.

While at Hamish, my hope of a speedy departure by either of the vessels there was put an end to by the determination of one of the captains to proceed to the coast of Lazistan with a cargo of provisions (his brother, with a third vessel, further southward, goes there likewise), and by the other having entered into a contract with a noble from Abazak to abide for about six weeks the arrival of forty persons from that province, who are going on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and for whom eighty piastres per head was the passage price agreed on. Besides them, the captain purposes taking twenty other persons of the neighbourhood of Hamish; and all these, with the crew to boot, in an old, clumsy cockle-shell of a craft, of not more, I should think, than ten to twelve tons burden, with a great fixture of a mast in the centre, and an unwieldy square sail. If I go by her, or, in charity at all events, Heaven send her fair wind and not too much of it! and a sea free from steam-ships and other hostile cruisers.

After having finished the shipping business, I requested Hassan Bey to carry me forward to Arduwhatsh (Ardler), for the purpose of seeing the new fort there, and forming further acquaintance with *Kwat* Ali-bí, a wealthy noble, of almost princely rank, very noble deportment, great courage, enterprise, and influence.

Our highway was as usual the shingly sea-beach, and I found the coast covered all the way by dense forests, of which oaks of very stately growth formed the greater portion. The valley of Arduwhatsh is by far the largest and most level I have yet seen on the

coast, and is I understand surpassed by none to the north of Gaghra, except that of Ghesh. It appeared to me about a mile in breadth, and its rich pasture (none being ploughed, on account of the fort) formed with the silvery stream, the wooded and hamlet-decked heights around, the darker forest-clad mountains beyond, and a dominant rugged snowy ridge to the eastward, a landscape of remarkable beauty and interest, one singular feature of which (for this coast) is the *stone* basement-story of a pretty large dwelling-house, which had been built for the residence of the father of the late Beislam Bey, by Turks brought from the coast of Lazistan, after the fashion seen in the villages there—that is, a basement-story of strong masonry (with loop-holes for musketry all round) upon which is erected another story of wood. The masonry alone now remains, and it appears to have been long left to ruin, the family of the innovator having reverted to the *chaumières en clayonnage* of the country. Fire, however, appears to have caused the change.

The valley of Ardler was formerly defended by a dense silvan wall, towards the sea, which the Russians of course so far demolished. Their fort, placed in the centre of the clearance, is the most unassailable on the coast, the cannons having everywhere a level range, and there being no near heights to command the locality. I had to climb a tree to get a good near view of it. The garrison kept there since its construction is stronger than any on the coast, excepting those of Anapa and Ghenlejík, being about a thousand men; who yet never venture out, even to

procure wood. The Azras make use of the pasturage of the valley to within about cannon-range from the sea.

It seems incredible that provisions of any sort could be spared on this mountainous, wooded, and populous coast; and still more that they should be purchased with advantage for the coast of Natoli; yet such is in general the case, the soil of the latter being poor, and the inhabitants greatly dependent for corn upon importation from the Crimea or the Danube. I am further assured that on this southern portion of the coast a dearth has not been known within the memory of man, and that during the severe famine which prevailed towards and throughout the north in 1834, two hundred boat-loads of provisions were sent thither from this and the two neighbouring valleys alone.

I have been agreeably surprised at seeing some specimens of our western literature even amid these remote valleys. On the 6th I was shown at the hamlet of an Armenian, among other books, copies of Telemachus and Robinson Crusoe, printed very fairly in Armenian at Venice, and published by the monks of an Armenian monastery there.

During our absence in the south there was a skirmish at Sûbesh, in consequence of the Russians essaying to cut down some wood which afforded shelter for marksmen too near their fort. The affair is only memorable in so far that not being able to bring up cannons to the heights, the Russians made use of hand-grenades to repel their assailants, who seem to have been much surprised by this new invention, as

they suppose it, but which, however, did not shield the Russians from a murderous rifle-fire.

Since the re-embarkment of a portion of the army at that station, reinforcements have been received which make up its strength to nearly its original amount. From the north, with which there happens at present to be little communication, I have learnt that previous to the debarkment at Sûbesh, a force of about 2000 men was landed at Semez, and that it was in great part composed of Crimean Tatars, sundry of whom have already deserted. Oh! that I had some good news to send northward to sustain the spirit of the people there; but when that may be the case, it is hard to conceive; for by a vessel which arrived at Agûïa on the 10th, having escaped from Sinope under false pretences, I learn that my messenger, Hadji Ismael, after a residence there of two months, was still only preparing for his departure by an open boat which he had bought to take me back by, and was rigging according to his nautical fancy.

I was told formerly in the north of the Russians having demanded of the Sultan, immediately after their Unkiar-Skelesi achievement, permission to make a route for their pilgrims from Samsûn to Jerusalem. The statement appeared to me so improbable that I thought no more of it; but it has been repeated to me with such confidence, and upon such strong authority; viz. that of Hassan Bey's brothers, who were at the time in question upon a mission to the Russian court, and through whom the demand was made to the Ottoman court, that I no

longer see any reason to doubt it. But, if the demand be thought improbable, what must be thought of its having been complied with, and of its being at this moment a finished convention that Russia may send such a force as she deems requisite (a hundred thousand men was said to be the amount bargained for) to cut a (military) road, and establish a line of (military) posts through the very centre of the Turkish dominions!

Shanda, 12th July.—Overtures having been received last month from the Azras of Sûkûm for the redemption of the captives, the Prince of Ghesh, and some others, were immediately despatched to that quarter to arrange the affair; but they soon returned with the information that the Prince of Sûkûm, the Russian general, and several other persons of rank and influence, would be at Ardler upon a certain day, and that they desired a meeting with our chiefs and elders for the purpose of making a very important communication.

On the 28th I received a citation to this meeting, at which I, at once, determined to be present—although it interrupted a journey to Abazak for which I had just prepared—feeling assured that some fresh imposition upon the people of this country was about to be attempted, which I might contribute to avert.

On the 30th I arrived at Ardler with Hassan Bey, and many others of his neighbourhood; but although that was the day appointed for the general rendezvous and its "important communication," on our arrival we had all our airy speculations (for no less

than six generals *were said* to be awaiting us) blown up, on learning that the prince and his confederates had become impatient, and broached the subject of their mission the previous day. It proved to be no other than a proposition for peace with (that is surrender to) the Russians, which met with a prompt and peremptory refusal, to which were added (to the prince) expressions of the bitterest reproach and contempt; stigmatising him as a traitor to his country, and a renegade to his religion.

Finding myself thus fooled with the rest, after spending three days with the congress (assembled for the administration of the national oath and to which I had been invited) I made the people a short address, intending to proceed next day northward towards Abazak, for the steadfastness of which province I felt much anxiety. First, however, the arrival and representations of two deputies; then of another, and lastly, of Hadji Dakhûm-okû himself, furnished me reasons for prolonging my stay with the congress; as measures of real importance were about to be undertaken, in which it was said my presence would be very beneficial. In short, an essay was about to be made by the establishment of the permanent local judicatures I have spoken of, to supersede the occasional and unwieldy congresses, which by the intervals between their proceedings give time for the growth of treason and other crimes. As this measure is of such eminent utility, and as it is precisely what I suggested and strongly recommended being resorted to, both here and in the north (where there is more necessity for it), it may

easily be conceived that I readily co-operate, especially as the Russians—never asleep where good is to be done, which may prove of detriment to them, and not disheartened at the defeat of their attempt through the Prince of Sûkûm—have offered five hundred silver roubles to any one who shall mar the undertaking. I purpose sending you a copy of the regulations which have been compiled, and of which nine copies have been distributed throughout the territory of this federation, extending on the coast (as I have said) from Toapse to Gaghra. It is therefore unnecessary for me to say more on the subject here than that this portion of the coast is to be divided into about nine districts, in each of which are to be nominated (by general consent) forty seniors, who are to be sworn on the Koran to do their utmost to detect, judge, and punish, according to the laws in use, all traitorous communications with the enemy, theft, and other crimes; and in any cases of difficulty three of these local judicatures are to be convened together. Two have already been nominated; viz. at Ardler and Ghesh, and in a few days more a third will be constructed for the coast to the southward; no other difficulty being experienced than the shyness of some individuals to be put in nomination. Whatever business appertained formerly to the general congresses has also been transacted; particularly the administration of the national oath to all such as are suspected of having visited any of the forts, or of having committed theft. Among the former, a tokav, who had bought salt of the Russians at Ardler, and could not pay the penalty (amounting

to six purses, about thirty pounds), has been sold as a slave; and one of the young princes of Ghesh, who had been permitted by the elders to go to the southward by the pass of Gaghra—in doing which a passport from the commandant must be obtained—has been fined in the value of a serf for having, at the request of the said commandant, given him a sabre richly ornamented, and worth about a hundred roubles, and having accepted from the same *liberal* individual a donation (or rather payment) of twenty roubles!

But as the princes of this part of the country (and hence southward) retain much of their ancient influence over their numerous retainers, one of the most important affairs to be disposed of was the adjustment of a feud in the family of Rûstam-pé * of Ghesh, the next in rank to that of Ali Akhmet of Sûtsha; one of the princes having accidentally, in a quarrel with one of his cousins, killed him instead of his serf at whom he fired. The price of his blood had therefore to be compensated; and his half-brother (by a different mother) argued that the equalisation of the price of blood never having been introduced into this part of the country, he was entitled to insist upon adherence to ancient usage in this case. The compensation, therefore, or penalty, was agreed upon at eighteen each of serfs, horses, guns, sabres—all prime. On account, however, of the partial relationship of the plaintiff, only half of the above amount was awarded him, and he further remitted two of

* Pé is equivalent to the okû, or son of the north.

the serfs; upon which adjustment having been arrived at—though not until the third day of the trial —the Koran was produced, and he and his brother declared upon oath their satisfaction with the proceedings. He appears to be an amiable individual, (Hassan Bey gave him his sister in marriage lately,) and he signalised himself last year by having killed and spoiled a Georgian prince in the Russian army; but his cousins had been guilty of want of enterprise or participation in the war; of oppressing their feudatories; of seducing one of their cousins; and one of them was detected in the theft of a gun, even on the very first day of the congress. In consequence of these delinquencies the Hadji and the other seniors read the family a severe lecture, in which they were reminded of their illustrious descent (from an emir or descendant of the Prophet); of the excellent character and great usefulness of their predecessors; of the disgraceful contrast afforded by their conduct, which they were told they must change; otherwise, as being devoid of courage and of any real power, the influence that remained would be lost to them.

To all this Heyderbeh, the eldest of the family, returned most humble answers; pleading, as some extenuation for them, that they were young and had been early left without any seniors to guide them; that the innocent should not be confounded with the guilty (his brother was the malefactor), and professing his desire for peace and good-will being established among them. As all this took place publicly —that is in the presence of two or three hundred

persons—and as both the lecture and reply were pronounced aloud before all, it is to be hoped that good may ensue.

In this affair, as in that of the local judicatures—and indeed in all where two parties are concerned—two envoys were employed in passing between the congress and the congregation around the prince (which sat under a tree at some distance from us), and they delivered the communication of each, as is usually done, at the highest pitch of their lungs.

Among other differences between them, these princes wished the congress to decide which of them should have the konakship or protectorate (always profitable as well as creditable) of a Turkish merchant who had been suckled by one of the princesses and brought up in the family. But the congress (after this matter had been referred to me) refused peremptorily all interference, declaring that the merchant was at liberty to elect whomsoever he chose as his konak.

One of the main springs—if not the chief one—of all the good that is now being done for this portion of the country is the venerable *Barzek* Hadji Dakhûm-okû. In his younger days he signalised himself as one of the most dauntless of his fraternity, and among other warlike exploits he shared or led in so many plundering expeditions into Mingrelia and Imeritia, that it is said he knows the name of almost every village of that portion of Georgia. He was shot through the chest in the storming of the fort of Gaghra, and eight other wounds attest his singular gallantry. But for twelve years he has

G. Barnard, lith. from a Sketch by Jas. Stanislaus Bell, Esq.

Dey & Hughes, lith.rs to the Queen

JUDICIAL CONGRESS IN THE VALLEY OF GUESH.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

abandoned all such practices, limiting his warfare to that against the true enemies of his country, in which he is as indefatigable as in the administration of its civil affairs. To his influence I believe it is mainly to be ascribed that the products of the fines imposed by the judicial congresses, instead of having been divided among the members as formerly (and as is still done in the north), have for some time past been placed in the hands of the Prince of Sashe for the purchase of ammunition for the pieces of artillery captured last year. Through his exertions, and those of Jerikho Islam, the patriotic example of this part of the country has been extended into the mountains behind Sûkûm-kaleh, a deputation from whose inhabitants, consisting of a prince and others, has just been here for the concerting of measures; and from them we learn that the Turkish merchants from Sûkûm-kaleh have been dismissed, and forbid coming any more among them, as they preferred dispensing with salt, and other articles they brought, to having them from a Russian establishment.

The Hadji is moreover remarkably scrupulous in the observation of the rites of his religion, which zeal in him seems to spring solely from the native fervour and integrity of his character. He is singularly abstemious at meals; he never partakes in the strong potations in which the people of this part of the coast are too apt to indulge when several meet at the evening meal; and although he be fond of jocularity in its season, I have frequently observed that his arrival, amid a party even of his intimate friends, puts no little restraint upon their mirth, from

the general respect entertained for him. On the occasion of the congress and its great concourse of attendants passing the rapid river of Arduwhatsh, so swollen with muddy torrents from the mountains, that we had to await the subsiding of the flood for half a day, I had occasion to witness and experience his active humanity, in the violent vociferations he used to restrain the younger and less cautious from rushing heedlessly into the angry currents, of which four, deep, dark with mud, and extremely rapid, had to be crossed. I had the greatest apprehension of some being drowned (some were carried away to a considerable distance) of those who thus struggled; but the Hadji got the majority formed into masses for their mutual support; and so tender was he of my safety, that he placed me between himself and another tall, powerful man, and kept firm hold of my arm wherever the danger was greatest.

But I fancy I have said enough to impress you with some portion of my admiration for the character of this Circassian Washington; and to enable you to judge of the indignation and disgust with which I learned on the 6th, that General Rayevski had offered a thousand roubles to any one who would assassinate him, and carry his head into any of the forts. My former statements as to such being the practice of the Russian generals in their warfare against this country may have met with incredulity from some, as not supported by sufficient proof; but this general has kindly fortified me against all cavillers, by having embodied this his promise of reward for murder in a letter (written in Turkish, to which his seal is affixed),

which was next day handed, open as it had been received, to the Hadji, in the midst of the congress. It is now in my possession. A translation is subjoined *, and I leave to others to comment on the iniquity of its sophistry. Immediately after it had been read, Kerantûk—a young and near relative of the Hadji and every way worthy of the relationship—got hold of it, tore it into three fragments, and threw it in wordless but bitter indignation upon the ground. I interposed for its preservation, explaining to them its value as a proof, in other countries, of the extreme wickedness of the Russian character. And can it be wondered at that after so many exemplifications of such devilism, I should feel the most intense interest, and be disposed to make the greatest sacrifices to rescue this people from becoming its victim?

Shemitwhatsh, 15th.—We are now at the base of the central mountains, which stretch in lofty, rugged and—except towards their highest summits—forest-clad masses from the sea at Gaghra towards the north-east. Here and there upon them are still to be seen vast beds of "inert snow," although we have had of late copious rain, and very sultry weather. Bears and wolves are "the native burghers" of their impervious forests, and the upper region appears to be tenanted by the chamois, the horns of which have been shown me.

Both the hills and valleys from Mamaï to this neighbourhood have soil of exuberant fertility; the forests, chiefly of oak being everywhere of magnificent growth.

* It will be found in the Appendix.

The chief feature of this portion of the country of the Azras is, that along the whole coast a great breadth of forest seems to have been left in its native wildness from time immemorial. Most of the usual pathways through it are at present obstructed by trees felled across them, to prevent incursions of the Russians and the Azras of Sûkûm (in consequence of the late inroad into their country). But, indeed, throughout most of the country, the pathways are such as to require guides and much caution in travelling—what with ascents and descents almost precipitous; holes of mud; prostrate trees and broken trees, concealed amidst gigantic fern and other undergrowths; festoons of a parasitical plant strong enough to dismount a rider or stop his horse, which may, moreover, get restive in an awkward locality (as happened with mine) when pierced by its large prickles; and, last not least, dangerous fords whose footing changes with every great freshet. A tree or two awkwardly cut down here and there in the forest; some split trees forming a frail bridge (which in general one had best avoid) over a ravine, if near some hamlet, are the sole evidence of labour bestowed for the wayfaring. The cause of such habitual neglect appears to be that, from time immemorial, there were feuds, hereditary and new, between the Azras and the Adighes to the north; hostilities were often mutually committed by parties landing from boats by night; and the former being least numerous and enterprising had, of course, most need of native defence. It is only since about the time of my arrival in the country, that these feuds—though

latterly waning — have been finally extinguished, and the whole coast as far as Gaghra combined for their general defence and government; chiefly as I have said through the exertions of these patriots, the Hadji and Islam; and I am assured that, not three years since, it would have been at the risk of my life or liberty had I traversed, as I have of late incidentally done, some of these forests with but one individual from the north as an escort.

Here, especially as one approaches the Gaghra mountains, Islamism becomes the exception; but as for the rule of faith of the majority I cannot say much from personal observation, though I am told that there are crosses, and that prayers are said at stated times before them. Many however I think, if questioned about their faith, would, like Padirshah, our jolly and most hospitable landlord here, answer most conscientiously in the words of Pulci—

> "Ma sopra tutto nel buon vin ho fede;
> E credo che sia salvo che gli crede."

I am told that many of them even keep hogs and eat of their flesh; but it appears to be rarely or somewhat secretly done; for I have not seen anything of proof in the many hamlets I have visited and passed. As the Hadji, like the other *tamatas* of the congress, holds this a chief sin, he has used his influence to extirpate it; and thus the other day it was mentioned to me as a triumph that a considerable slaughter (acquiesced in however by the proprietors) of these household swine had been made in a neighbourhood thus offending.

In a wooden sepulchre in which I slept the other night, I observed suspended over the grave a remnant

of the clothes and the powder-horn of the deceased warrior beneath; and around the headstone (but it was of wood) of another grave was entwined some of the hair of the disconsolate widow. Such tokens serve in my eyes for some redemption from the harsh opinion of these people my present Islamite associates seek to impress on me.

Turkey-corn is the grain chiefly cultivated here, which being coarsely ground, is baked on a stone, into thick cakes: while warm they seem to me preferable to the insipid, saltless pasta of the north.

At Ghesh—where by the way we inhabited for some days the galleries of a three-storied house of stone and wood, built more than a century ago, for the prince, in the style of Läzistan—a Turkish captain brought me a coarse-grained stone impregnated with coal which blazed a little when put into the fire. It had been given him by some lad; but I could not get any information about its site. I doubt not however that it is in the valley or its hills. On the beach, a little to the north, I saw much red sandstone*.

During the various proceedings of this congress

* These geological incidents remind me to remark (in reference to what I formerly wrote of medial and supermedial orders of rocks) that an eminent geologist, on seeing the specimens of rocks I brought home, and the *résumé* of observations I made (in Letter IX. since it was printed), gave it as his opinion that there were not yet data sufficient for deciding to what classes the various rocks of the Circassian coast belong. Therefore in having thus "rushed in" where others "fear to tread," I have given an instance of the danger of generalising to which tyros in this fascinating science are peculiarly exposed. What I called chalk—from its appearance on a passing glance—might perhaps have been more properly termed a chalky limestone.

I have frequently, and even to a greater degree than in the north, been struck with admiration at the extreme readiness, grace, and energy, with which individuals (nay almost all more or less who spoke) addressed—and some of them at considerable length—so large an assemblage. This is decidedly a peculiarity in the people of this coast, and may be attributed to the frequency, freedom, and exciting interest of their public proceedings. But two individuals pre-eminently appear to me to rival, if not surpass, in the manly deportment of oratory, any of the most noted I remember to have seen in the senate, at the bar, or on the stage. Kemble, Talma, or Kean, must have admired, and perhaps have envied the energetic dignity, the graceful manliness, with which Ali-bí, chief of Ardler, advanced at the head of the forty magistrates, just chosen for that district, to the Koran suspended in the midst of the congress; pronounced a short declaration; confirmed it by touching the sacred volume, and retired, making the obeisance of the salaam: and every one who but saw, without understanding, young Kerantûk in his frequent addresses, who witnessed the abstraction of his keen dark eye—as if its vision were for the time suspended while the tide of his thought swells highest;—the coolness with which he receives vehement replies, and the energetic, yet patient, tenacity of purpose with which he applies himself to their dissection and refutation—while the grey-bearded seniors, who frequently give way to him, where exposition and argument are necessary, sit in mute attention around—must pronounce him evidently and remarkably quali-

fied by nature to rise to distinction and pre-eminence wherever mental endowment is in requisition. The former of these individuals is about forty-five, and the latter thirty-five years of age. If they survive—for both are fearless warriors—they must rise to the chief conduct of affairs of this portion of the country, especially Kerantûk, the energy of whose character has already led him to surmount the bar of respect which opinion here opposes in public debate to the career of young men. As for the other, he appears to excel more as a tactician; to be chary of entering the lists, but upon special occasions and with antagonists worthy of him; or if compelled to do otherwise, to get rid speedily of inferiors by wit and sarcasm. Both are models of manly symmetry combined with strength; both are sincere and firm in their patriotism and faith, and free from reproach in their general conduct; and such a combination, it would appear, can inspire as much nobility of demeanour and grace of action as the most consummate art can teach.

But we have here also our mob-orator—a capital one too, more than a match in stature and in power of lungs for the ci-devant champion of Matchless Blacking and British rights—in the person of Arslanpé (alias Fitz-lion), a noble of Ghesh, of about six feet two or three inches in height, and herculean form about the shoulders especially; of free and lively address and ready delivery. He was selected to promulgate to the Azras assembled in that valley the new regulations to which they are henceforth to conform. This he did like a very Stentor, from the

lofty gallery of our lodging; introducing each new head of the subject, and silencing any clamorous interrupter by literally screaming the first few syllables, which procured quiet and attention for the rest of the paragraph. The ready gaiety with which he chimed in with and gave the turn to any laugh raised among the crowd beneath, and then returned to the matter of the regulations, communicated to him by those around him above, among whom also there was occasionally enough of noisy interruption—gave the scene quite the characteristics of one of our boisterous yet exciting electioneerings.

You will see, by a short vocabulary which I annex, that the language of the Azras is decidedly a different one from the Adighe, or Circassian; and although most of the seniors of the congress speak both, yet those from the north appear to prefer employing a native of these parts upon special occasions. By a third vocabulary*, you will see that there is even a third language, which is spoken from Vardan to Hamish, and for some distance inland; while Mons. Klaproth confidently asserts that the language is essentially the same along the whole coast. This, conjoined with others of his confident assertions, for which I have found him to have equally little warrant, has tended in some degree to shake my faith in him generally.

In this frontier district, as it may be called, where many individuals are suspected of holding prejudicial communication, and feeling dangerous sympathy

* They will be found in the Appendix.

with their recreant countrymen towards Sûkûm, some backwardness in promoting the measures in hand has been shown, in consequence of which hostages were taken and held to be sold as serfs until more complying alacrity was shown. But now everything proceeds favourably, and to-morrow, it is said, will see a completion of the arrangements for holding in fidelity and good government the southern portion of the coast, from Ardler to Gaghra. So soon as circumstances admit, the rest from Ardler to Toapse is to be similarly dealt with, and in that portion I believe less difficulty is anticipated.

I find that in accordance with what I stated on the 6th April, Sûkûm-kaleh was never at any time governed or garrisoned by subjects of the Sultan; that that potentate never received any dues from it, or exercised over it any sort of jurisdiction. Its cession to Russia by Turkey must therefore be now looked upon like that of Sûjûk-kaleh, as an imposture practised upon Europe at the instance of the former.

Although the proceedings of the congress have occasionally been sufficiently interesting, it may readily be believed that attendance at them, for now upwards of a fortnight without intermission, has become rather tedious, as I have had to sit (with somewhat of the air of a judge) among the seniors for the greater part of each day on the ground (softened only by some fern or hazel twigs) throughout such weather as Jove might send—broiling heat, or torrents of rain—with no other shelter than such as the trees of the locality chosen afforded. Our

daily journeys, though short, have been occasionally exceedingly fatiguing, from the nature of the country. But what must be said of the *tamatas*—the old men, who, in this mental and bodily labour, and to the entire postponement of their own affairs and the exhaustion of their horses (here always a prime consideration), will spend now some months, as they have done more or less each year, without any sort of compensation, but the satisfaction of mind they may thence derive.

And the tedium of the days of this circuit has been fully equalled by that of the nights, excepting some on which we bivouacked; for besides the attention deemed necessary to the English stranger, Hassan Bey, my konak, is everywhere a favourite, and thus most of our hosts have killed a cow or bullock on the arrival of our party (generally about twenty), and made a "jollification," in which, eked out with singing, dancing, pistol-firing, &c., the greater part of each night, that is all the night and much of the morning, has been spent; making me fear I should become unwell from an almost entire absence of sleep. It appears to be the etiquette of these Azras to set their young folks a-dancing immediately when our supper began, although outside of our house, or at such a distance from where we ate, that our only excitement was the remote sound of mirth. Sometimes, however, individuals or couples came and danced round our fires; and there and outside, by large parties, couples or individuals, was this amusement, to no other music but that of their voices, often continued till near day-break: I have even seen it

resumed next forenoon, when the heat without motion was sufficiently oppressive. The ballet-masters of Paris should come and recruit for their corps among these sinewy Azras.

Sometimes our only light was the said fire, then a further cause of my sleeplessness; for to its heat was superadded that of the climate at this season, and of our score of men radiating from the centre of our circular apartment, like lances in an ornamental armoury. Many of the guest-houses are of that form, with or without a central opening or funnel for the smoke; but if square, an aperture is generally left for that purpose in the wall at each extremity of the apartment, under the roof. When the weather and convenience admit of it, I generally escape from these ovens of guest-houses, and have my bed-mat laid under some tree.

I hope what I have said of the judicial elders is calculated to impress that respect for them which their strenuous endeavours to establish some improvement in the administration of government among their countrymen, and to give consistency and vigour to the spirit of resistance against their invaders, so highly merit; and it should not be forgotten that these people are destitute of precedents, excepting such as their own country affords, and the meagre knowledge of Turkish law possessed by a few Turkish mollahs. To one used to see justice during its administration invested with much solemnity, it seems at first odd that she should, as here, deign to dispense with it; and he almost doubts her identity. But from all I can learn, the decisions of these elders, who are invariably among

the most upright and intelligent persons of their fraternities, are as invariably dictated by a genuine spirit of equity; and I never heard of resistance to them being attempted. This, indeed, is little to be feared, as these *Tarko-khass* may be called a court of representatives invested permanently, not by temporary delegation, with the supreme power of the whole community. Their number; the publicity of their proceedings, and the general freedom of debate, seem to prevent effectually all approximation to tyranny; and their harmony is secured by the entire absence of any motive for selfish emulation—of all emolument, save the respect, esteem, and deference of their fellow-countrymen.

The peculiarity of these judicial scenes for a rover from the dominion of (what is called) civilisation is, that those leaders of the people seem as yet to have no idea of acting on its imagination by decking their proceedings with some state-effect. They have the first choice of seats on the ground of the place of meeting, of which they then become the centre; and no one who is not in some degree privileged (by age and character chiefly) but stands or seats himself at a respectful distance from them. Yet it is not uncommon to see some of the judges—during intervals in the proceedings or in such as do not occupy or interest them all—engaged in preparing bridles, or saddle-girths (which every one does for himself); cleaning and adjusting arms, &c. And the Hadji especially, whose spirit is somewhat fiery and impatient, frequently leaves his place to argue down, face to face, some tenacious disputant; or to hurry for-

ward (with good humour, spiced, and that at times pretty highly, with imperiousness) to the Koran some demurring individual whose oath is deemed necessary to prevent him committing further delinquencies, or make him more amenable to punishment.

But at times incidents even more characteristic of the entirely pristine and simple state of this society occur; as, for instance, the other morning, when, previous to the proceedings of the day being entered on, first one individual approached—as if full of matter of moment—placed himself on his knees, and narrated to the elders a dream (not his own, nor by any means a short one), of favourable omen which had just been dreamt, and then another handed them the shoulder-bones of a sheep or goat, just killed, whose transparent parts showed prognostics equally favourable,—all, of course, of public interest, because directly opposed to that of the Russians.

Such want of formality may not be material, so long as the essentials of right reasoning, acquiesced in and *sustained* by the majority, regulate their proceedings; or form may come hereafter, as the blossom of the plant now so vigorously bourgeoning; but I could not help remarking to the Hadji upon the air of joking and levity with which many touch the Koran in taking the oath, and upon the benefit that might arise from requiring more respectful demeanour in the performance of that act of obligation—and so forth. To which he replied, all that might come about in time, but could not be expected at first, as the people of these parts are still somewhat barbar-

ous—alias, not all Mussulman, which I believe to be a more correct exposition of the phenomenon.

On the 7th the Hadji received word from *Barzek* Beislam (his near relative, and, like him, of prodigious activity) that a messenger had arrived in great haste from Abazak (but had stopped short, his horse having been spent), with intelligence that General Sass had again made offers of peace (as they call it), on the most favourable terms—no hostages or any other restrictions being to be required; and that it was greatly to be feared that a considerable portion of the Abazaks might be disposed to accede to them. Omar Efendi, the secretary of the congress, was immediately summoned, and the Hadji (with some suggestions from myself) rapidly dictated to him an address, in which, after the usual topics—an appeal to their fidelity, &c.—they were plainly told (and this was the *noble* Hadji's suggestion, though a theme I have often touched upon), that their nobles might desire friendship with Russia, because they would gain by it; whereas the tokavs would be reduced to the same grade as their serfs; that if they made terms with the Russians, they would find their friends and neighbours here turned into the most implacable enemies, who would wage against them a warfare of surprisals, incessant and irresistible; and, by way of convincing them, some of their most defenceless districts were specified.

LETTER XXXII.

THE RUSSIANS EFFECT A LANDING AT WAIA—DEATH OF THE PADISHA—VISIT TO ABAZAK—GLEN OF THE MAKUPSE — COMPARATIVE INSECURITY OF PERSON AND PROPERTY IN ABAZAK—CAUSES OF THE NON-ADMINISTRATION OF THE NATIONAL OATH—CEREMONIES ATTENDANT ON THE RESTORATION OF A PKHUR TO HIS FAMILY—HOT SULPHUR-SPRINGS—RESUMPTION OF THE CEREMONIES —SALT-SPRINGS—ORNITHOLOGY.

KHISSA, *25th June*, 1839.

MY DEAR ——. The departure of my konak from the congress was hastened by intelligence which we received on the 15th, that no less than thirty-five sail of vessels, large and small, had been seen cruising off his échelle. As Khissa has been specially menaced by the Russian officers of late, on account of the hostility they now entertain towards Hassan Bey, the hour of its destiny seemed at length arrived. For this reason, and because I wished personally to see the condition of Abazak, I also took leave of the congress. With us returned not only all those who had originally accompanied us, but others also. On our arrival, however, we found the coast clear, and that the menace had been merely a *ruse*, to distract attention; the fleet having soon after stood for Waïa. There, on the 19th (wind and weather being entirely favourable), it landed some ten thousand men, with the expense of but very little ammunition. Not that a considerable force of Circassians was not

there assembled to give them a suitable reception; but this can, of course, in the great disparity of numbers (caused by these dodgings), of discipline, and of arms and ammunition, only be done where circumstances afford an opportunity for a charge during debarkation. This danger the general again avoided, by having the three-deckers ranged along the coast (the depth of water proved greater than I supposed) of the plain to the north of the river, which, as it extends for nearly two miles in length and about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, was evidently the most eligible situation for a fort; and, as such, on its skirt the Circassian force was posted. But south of the stream, which is deep and broad and whose banks are thickly covered with trees and underwood, with but one path through them, there is another plain less in extent, yet sufficiently large for the formation of such a force as I have mentioned. Thither, then, after some cannonading of the northern plain, the general had his army and its artillery speedily transported by steamers, small vessels, and boats; while the larger vessels effectually prevented the Circassians shifting their position, unless by making a detour over the rugged bases of the hills, the time necessary for which circuit would have made it useless. Subsequently there was some fighting, but not such as to prevent the army taking up a position on the north of the stream, where a fort is now being constructed.

Hassan Bey would appear, from what I have said, to have forgotten his engagement with his brothers; and in fact he has at length permitted his warlike

spirit to revert to its native course—though not without some warrant; for by letters (conveyed secretly through the Russian forts) from Lazistan; by reports from three deserters from Gaghra (one of whom, a Pole from Warsaw, I have seen and conversed with in German), and other quarters, he (as well as I, so far) has been led to believe that the great desire of the Russians for the cessation of hostilities here (granting terms so much more favourable than formerly) has been caused by a critical posture of their affairs in Asia; and that his brothers, in conjunction with the Pasha of Egypt*, had marched against the Russians in Persia. The first, however, in point of order, was a letter which he received two months ago from one of these brothers, in which, at the end, there was a small obscure paragraph expressing entire satisfaction about something concerning Circassia. In consequence, I presume, of this obscurity, Hassan had at first given it little attention; but, upon our talking the matter over, I learned from him that he had written this brother for news; and this paragraph appeared to me the answer, couched as hieroglyphically as possible, for fear of its falling into the hands of the enemy. And as all are now sadly in want of a stimulant, I begged him to communicate its purport to some of the chiefs. This he did; and from this small spark has arisen a mighty blaze of excitement, which (of course with many

* The general belief among the Circassians at this time—and even among such Turks as I came in contact with—appeared to be, that this *orthodox* Pasha desired only the emancipation of their Padisha from the thraldom of the Muscovite *Ghiaour*.

augmentations) has spread along the entire coast, and thence into Abazak; has been one cause of the unanimity and scorn with which the pacific offers of the Russians have been rejected, and consequently has drawn down upon the head of Hassan the denunciations of their military authorities. But Hassan is not a man of half measures; and as the Prince of Sûkûm thought fit to join in these denunciations and reproaches, Hassan immediately sent him, into the fort of Ardler, a letter, renouncing entirely their old friendship, and stigmatising him as a renegade, a traitor, &c.; and although his hopes of Russian disasters have evaporated under the renewal of hostilities, we were no sooner returned here than he summoned all the neighbours, and engaged them to cooperate with him in fortifying their valley, by running a line of ramparts, ditches, &c., across a gorge about half-way up; for towards the sea it is almost indefensible, the hills being low, and both they and the valley entirely cleared long since of their protecting forests. But as such public work goes on sleepily without contributions from private individuals, (attack, not defence, being the habit of the people,) Hassan, myself, and others, have had to furnish sundry cows, sheep, goats, and skins of wine for the entertainment of the labourers; and much yet remains to be done.

Besides the messenger from Abazak, no less than forty persons of that province arrived soon after, as a deputation to the congress here, for concerting measures to prevent the acceptance of General Sass's pacific offers, which is the more feared that the Rus-

sians are about to establish a fort and colony towards the mouth of the Shagwashe, which has hitherto been the highway for inroads into their territory. This mission has greatly increased my anxiety to visit that part of the country; but my difficulty at present is in finding a sufficiently respectable escort in order to make my visit effective.

Meantime I have been consoled in learning, by a friend from Notwhatsh, that the people there, to whom I had just addressed a letter with such encouraging news as I had gleaned of late, remain quite stedfast, and have not as yet been molested with further warfare on the part of the Russians, who, to the number of 2000 men, are engaged with the new fort at Semez, and other extensive operations that show as if a colony were about to be established there also. Of late, the garrisons of the forts on this part of the coast have reported the death of *their friend* the Sultan, and for three days they made a sort of celebration of this joyful event, in the reality of which the Circassians place no reliance, believing it invented only for the purpose of disheartening them. But the report has been confirmed by the arrival of a Turkish vessel at Jankhoti, and the latter now seek to console themselves by the consideration that as the Padisha Mahmûd was said to have come under an engagement not to permit war with Russia during his lifetime, the government of his successor is relieved from that baleful obligation. This report formed the chief cause of Hassan Bey's change of conduct.

Being totally uncertain of what is passing in the rest of the world, I shall not speculate on this event,

however momentous it appear to me for the Turkish empire in the actual position of its affairs to be left under a long minority. Mahmûd, we are told, deplored greatly that five years more of life had not been granted him, that he might bring to maturity the measures he deemed salutary for his empire. It would at all events appear, that, upon his death, the Turkish co-operation in the blockade of this coast had been relaxed; judging by this late arrival of a vessel. On the other hand, two vessels, the captains of which got impatient and sailed hence without favourable wind, are said to have been captured. Both had letters from me (and one some superfluous baggage) which having thus miscarried, my friends must remain in ignorance of my fate—as I am of theirs—since the beginning of last March, unless a third letter to our consul at Trebizond, which I sent through the fort at Ardler, should have had better fortune.

2nd August.—The Russian squadron sailed within two or three days after landing the army at Waïa. It proceeded southward, and Hassan Bey has just received a letter from a friend near Sûkûm-kaleh, informing him that two thousand Georgians and Azras are being mustered there, along with a considerable Russian force, and that their destination is Khissa, where they are first to burn our hamlet, and then construct a fort as punishment for Hassan Bey's late encouragement to continue the war. But regardless of these threats, he has determined on proceeding with a force which is about to assemble to carry another foray into the country of these Azras.

Psekûps, 22nd August.—After about two years of expectation, I have at length accomplished a visit to this province of Abazak (for the safety of which I have of late been so very anxious), having on the 7th taken advantage of Ali-bí, of Arduwhatsh, proceeding hither with his *pkhûr* or *élève* of the noble sept of Yedig (Nogaï-okû Beislam), accompanied by his wife and two other females, and a cortège of some forty persons, of whom only seven or eight are his own people, the rest being friends, both nobles and tokavs, who accompany him to give greater dignity to the occasion—but on condition of receiving each a fat ox (or its value) on his return. Even his serfs will be thus remunerated.

I entered the province by the mountainous glen of the Makupse, having been detained (by indisposition) behind the rest, who took the circuitous but easier route by the strath of the Toapse, and I found the frontier, which there consists of a mountain, to be about ten hours' slow riding from the sea. After traversing another wooded mountain, where I am told persons at times have been stopped and had their arms and horses taken from them, one arrives on the rich and level strath of the Psekûps, which leads into the low, undulating, rich country, of which the greater portion of this province is composed, and which, from the frontiers of Shapsuk to that of Besni, is described to me as forming four good days' journeys, by a breadth, where greatest, of about three. It would be even less defensible than it is were it not for its numerous dense forests, crossed by mere cart-tracks, and its bridgeless streams.

But I speak beyond what I have seen, from the description of others; for any necessity for my incurring personal risk having passed away—by a congress having peremptorily rejected Sass's pacific offer, and a visit having been paid me here by Hadji-kû Mehmet, one of the very best persons of the province, and a member of its best and bravest sept, that of Yedig—I deemed it advisable to conform to the urgent cautions I received not to expose myself by excursions to a distance from the party with which I came, lest the reward offered for my person by the Russians, who have now some sort of influence in Psadûg (but half a day's journey from this) and the other Kûban provinces, might tempt some of the many bad subjects with whom the province is infested. For here the national oath has not I find as yet been administered, so that treachery and thieving are almost unchecked, save by the vigilance of each to protect his own property.

For this end the horses, excepting in some safer localities, are not left out to graze all night, even with a guard of armed men; but are fed, even at this season, in the stables, the doors of which are fastened with bars, and have a man, moreover, sleeping before each for further security. Besides the great inconvenience of such a state of things, the evil arising from a summer consumption of hay must, as in seasons such as the last when very many cattle perished from lack of provender, be very considerable. Yet all my exhortations to those I have seen, to imitate the meritorious example of the other two provinces, have as yet been answered by representa-

tions as to the great extent of this one; as if the labour of administering the oath could not be divided. But I fear there is also a want of unanimity among the persons of influence, as the tokavs assert that the nobles are desirous of Russian ascendancy in the hope of thereby acquiring greater power, and that the most of them are provided already with Russian passports. Fortunately the former class is much the largest, and it appears to remain firm; for at the great congress already mentioned, held lately on the Shag-washe (to which, as you may remember, a letter was sent by our congress at Ghesh), the pacific offers of General Sass—and they were purely pacific, being only for a suspension of hostilities—were firmly rejected, but on conditions such as those already proposed by the chiefs of the other provinces;—that the Russian forces should everywhere be withdrawn, from Sûkûm-kaleh to Anapa, and from Anapa to Karatshaï; which proposition Sass *is said* to have promised to report to his Emperor, and to have set a time against which the reply may be expected!

Luca had excited my curiosity as to the restoration of a *pkhûr* (or pupil) to his family, by repeatedly telling me that it was accompanied with "*beaucoup de cérémonies*," wherefore I travelled the quicker to be present at this notable example, and was fortunate enough to overtake the party of Ali-bí in a meadow on this stream, where they awaited the arrival of the ladies, and of an elderly noble who had accommodated me the previous night, and now accompanied me.

When all were mustered we set forth under the

conduct of two elderly nobles, and with the ladies in a light cart drawn by oxen, in the rear; while the most conspicuous objects in the centre were the pupil in complete war-accoutrements, mounted on a fiery Georgian steed, and dressed in a tunic of European cloth superbly ornamented, as well as his saddle and housing, with silver lace; and led beside him was a handsome white charger, whose saddle and housing were in like manner richly decorated—all having been furnished and presented to him by his *atalik*.

When within about two miles of our destination, the whole party—amounting to about forty—commenced singing, sometimes together and sometimes in responses, accompanied, as on all such occasions, by abundance of discharges of fire-arms, which I saw serve as a signal for a muster of spectators—male and female—on an eminence in our way, crowned by some hamlets and trees; on approaching which more nearly, all the younger men of our party armed themselves with pretty substantial branches of trees from the hurdled fences on each side. The cause of this proceeding speedily became apparent; for we no sooner neared a sort of pass amid the hamlets and trees, than forth sallied the body of natives similarly armed; who, amid yells and screams to terrify our horses, attacked our van in the most furious manner, beating with all their force both our men and horses with their great heavy branches, so that the whole of our party, though it made a stout resistance, was for a time forced to retreat and rally, when another onset was made—some of the stoutest forming a body-

guard to the females—and thus our way through the pass was at length forced in "the vexed current of a heady fight." But this was only preliminary to a series of running fights, all the rest of the way, in one of which, during a second repulse, I received with the rest several pretty severe thwacks across the shoulders, and might count myself lucky thus to escape; for I saw blood trickling down the heads of some; and all respect for persons seemed, for the time, out of the question.

But my chief fears were for the females, whom, in several of our flights, I saw on the eve of being overturned; and for some of my baggage, (the only stock of goods for my expenses,) which was merely tied in a cloak, and would inevitably have become the prey of our assailants if their hands had reached it. Luckily it was in the charge of a cross-grained, angry serf I had for an attendant, who frequently drew forth his pistol in its defence, and showed good tactics; sometimes keeping on the wing, or in the van of our party, opposite to where the chief attack was; and sometimes seeking shelter in the centre. It seemed lucky, also, that there was an awning to the ladies' vehicle, as the printed sheet which formed it was speedily made a prey of, and detached some half-dozen of the enemy to scuffle for it.

At length we reached the much desired hamlet of our pupil, when Ali-bí, accompanied by him, his white horse, the ladies, and some of his principal friends, dashed in at the gateway, and amid fresh firing delivered up young *Hopeful* to his family; while the rest of us betook ourselves to the guest-house, where

sundry of our late enemies also convened, and a good-humoured comparison of the "casualties" which had occurred closed this strange prelude to Luca's "beaucoup de cérémonies."

You may ask the cause of so hostile a reception; to which the only answer is, that it is the custom of the country, and that the people had a right to take from us whatever they could have possessed themselves of.

During the rest of the time I remained with the party, the only remarkable things I learned were that the provisions we consumed were in great part furnished by the *atalik*, Ali-bí, among which he had provided ten cows and bullocks, and thirteen sheep (some merchandise was even borrowed from me, to purchase such an article as butter for cookery); and that all our party, even the serfs, were making such presents to the family as they could, in the hope of receiving profitable returns when the family and its fraternity shall make their presents to Ali-bí for the discharge of his trust, and for his presents, I may add; for the commerce of presents is universal.

For the purpose of summoning the members of the fraternity to the discharge of this courtesy, the *pkûhr* set out on a round among them, the day after our arrival. Nothing further has yet occurred save fiddling, dancing and singing, throughout each long, hot day, for the amusement of the party; nor will until the 26th, when three days of "cérémonies" take place; but on a different key I believe from the prelude. If I remain, you shall hear further of them. Meantime, I have moved ten miles or so westward to a hamlet at the base of the hills, for

the purpose of being nearer a hot sulphur-bath, at which I have drunk and bathed some half-dozen times, and imagine myself in some measure benefited thereby.

About a dozen springs issue in the corner of a glade beneath a huge rock of very small-grained sandstone, and form a rill which would fill a wine-pipe in much less than a minute. The bath is formed merely by some stones and pieces of wood being laid around the springs in one corner, thus producing depth sufficient for a horizontal immersion. The heat of this bath is 111° of Fahrenheit; but that of another of the springs is 142°, and it appeared to me also the most highly impregnated, wherefore I took a specimen from it which we shall have analysed by and bye*. The bath is used, but so far as I see not by many of the people, and I believe I am entirely singular in the drinking of its water, whose taste is abundantly nauseous. There is a yellowish-white, but tasteless, incrustation on the stones near the springs; and the water of the rill, which looks clear while the sun is shining, assumes a bluish milky tinge when he sinks beneath the hill to the westward, which hue it carries for some distance into the Psekûps, leaving on the surface a slight scum. All the springs more or less emit bubbles of air, especially the one from which the bottle was filled. The people all call it a sulphur-bath, because they find that silver-lace, &c. become tarnished immediately on being held above it.

30*th*.—The "cérémonies" were resumed on the

* The analysis will be found in the Appendix.

26th; but they lasted only two days; there having been a sad short-coming of attendance in comparison with what generally occurs on such an occasion. Yet there must have been from three to four hundred persons present, the chief amusement of the younger portion of whom, male and female, was dancing throughout the greatest heat of the day in a circle (in the monotonous style I have before described) at the entrance of the hamlet: around them was another circle of men armed with branches of trees, who every now and then that those on horseback mustered on the outside to see the dancing, attacked them in the same *unceremonious* manner I have already described, and forced them to retreat to some distance, where they generally "formed," and under the conduct of some leader charged their assailants in turn. Although somewhat rough amusement, according to our notions, this is yet excellent training for the horses, in preparing them to endure *mêlées* with infantry.

Besides these *amusements* there was the pursuit-race after a horseman bearing a white-flag (which was soon captured and diminished in size;) and after an abundant repast of meat and pasta, with a fermented beverage from the south,* (furnished on both days for

* This beverage is thus prepared:—The juice of the grape is reduced, by boiling, to such a consistency as will enable it to be kept till the following season, without spoiling. Portions of it are taken as wanted, diluted with water, *fermented*, and sweetened with honey; and this beverage the Mussulmans, who will not touch wine, feel at perfect liberty to partake of, as having no affinity with it! One of them, a mollah, stated in my presence, that even a drop of wine falling upon a loaf should be considered as defilement, not only for it, but for half-a-dozen others, that might happen to be beneath it.

every one present,) the whole concluded with a (Circassian) horse-race. For this purpose, half-a-dozen of the fleetest having been starved for three days, were sent, towards evening, to a place indicated, about six miles off, whence they galloped back "à bride abattue." One of mine, a Kabardan, proved victor; but although my dragoman who rides him had been led to expect gaining a fat ox, and those who owned the second and third best horses, prizes of less value, none of these have been forthcoming; and I now learn that there has been such a woful deficiency of contributions of presents among the relatives and friends of the family of our *pkhûr*, that all the fine speculations of gain on the part of Ali-bí and his party are now at an end, and they *speak* of setting out on their return immediately, without accepting those that have been offered; viz. only some five or six indifferent horses, and two indifferent coats of mail, although on both days of the "cérémonies," there were heralds going about among the people and shouting lustily, for them to make, without delay, their contributions for the reward of the *atalik* and his friends.

The chief cause of all this disappointment is, that the tokavs, many of whom are the wealthiest, and on such occasions the most liberal, are at present in dispute with the nobles, and particularly with this fraternity, three of whom (one a son of our host here) having been killed by them in some *fracas*, the latter wish to cancel the equalisation of the price of blood introduced by Hassan Pasha, and to revert to the ancient Circassian discrimination; insisting that hence-

forth the value of thirteen serfs shall form the price of the blood of a noble, and eleven that of a tokav. In this attempt (very probably a suggestion of the Russians to some of them) I believe they will be defeated; as the tokavs greatly outnumber them, and many of the latter (including numbers from this river) are at present in attendance on the congress assembled on the Shagwashe, for the purposes of administering an oath in support of this equalisation, and of preventing peace being made with the Russians. Nothing however, I am sorry to learn, is being said about the suppression of thieving, or the punishment of individual acts of treachery.

Yesterday I made an excursion of about eight miles to the southward of this hamlet, for the purpose of inspecting some salt springs, in the hope of finding them such as, with some application of art, might make this inland portion of the country independent of supplies of salt from Russia—in peace or war almost equally dangerous—and I think it probable that this desirable object might be accomplished. The springs, to the amount of about a dozen, are situated in a hollow, or rather little plat, among the "*vorgebirge*," (we want such a word) or advanced hills of a higher range. Their water I found to be a very strong brine; but that of most was reduced to a small quantity at the bottom of so many little pits, which seemed to have been formed by the baling of the numerous parties who daily resort there for supplies, (it being regarded as a common good,) which in general they carry home in large open churn-like vessels, or in skins, and there evapo-

rate it. For a long time past, that is for more than a month, there has been little or no rain; it is now the height of the season of drought, and this has been an unusually severe one, yet I am told that before the people arrive each morning to drain them, the springs are running freely into the neighbouring brook, which waste a dam of a few dozen feet might completely prevent. Boring might increase the discharge—even in summer—of the springs which exist, and possibly create new ones; but for this there would be no immediate necessity if the people used precaution; for they all admit that they perceive but little difference in the product of their evaporation, even in winter, when the plat of the springs has become a little pond or rather marsh; and that the only evident dilution is during the final melting of the snow. Even then, however, it is not such as to induce them to suspend taking supplies. The soil around the springs is a light earth much mixed with gravel, and the rock of the locality—of which there is a large specimen close by—is a very hard conglomerate, through which many fragments —some pretty entire—of sea-shells of a small species of cockle are thickly interspersed.

In this province there are to be seen,—adjoining many of the little congregations of family tombs—wooden tanks neatly covered from the weather, and filled with water, in which small wild pears are put to ferment, making a very agreeable beverage for the wayfarers in the heat of autumn.

Elsewhere throughout the country bluish wood-pigeons are to be seen here and there; but this

province appears to be their head-quarters, and detachments of them, almost as numerous as sparrows, cover the fields in every direction. Hence, no doubt, the abundance of the *falco* tribe, with which the country everywhere swarms. Starlings are everywhere very numerous, also a bird resembling entirely our common blackbird, only that it is quite tuneless, as are the larks and thrushes. Indeed, the woods and fields throughout the country may be said to be almost destitute of song; and the merry strains of the skylark*, linnet, bullfinch, and goldfinch, as well as of those I have already mentioned, are nowhere to be heard. Woodpeckers abound—in great variety, both large and small—as well as snipes and crows (of the pink and black species one finds in the east of Europe); but I have never seen an individual of the genus *perdix*—either a quail or a partridge. I am told, however, that the former species is to be found nearer the Kûban.

A congress is being held in Shapsuk for the suppression of treason, and the throats of three notorious traitors have been cut *in terrorem*. This is the first time I have heard of this vindictive sort of punishment, and the excuse assigned is that the people are exasperated by having their flocks and herds near the Kûban frequently betrayed to the Russians. Where a government exercises such cruelty there may be combination to conceal crimes; but the effect must be different where the people themselves institute criminal proceedings, and decide on examples for terror.

* This species is not to be seen: the only one is the crested groundlark.

LETTER XXXIII.

HOSTILITIES IN PSADUG—OSMAN OF VARDAN—RETURN FROM ABAZAK—PROSPECTS OF THE WAR—ARRIVAL OF TURKISH VESSELS—DENOUEMENT OF ALI-BI'S ABAZAK EXCURSION—ASSAULT UPON A RUSSIAN FORT—PROGRESS OF CIVIL ORGANISATION IN ABAZAK—RELICS OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE CIRCASSIAN COAST—THE FORT AT SUBESH—SOCIAL PECULIARITIES OF THE CIRCASSIANS—COAL AT SUTSHA—CIRCASSIAN TRADE—RUSSIAN CRUISERS AND FOUL WINDS—OVERLOADING—NEWS FROM NOTWHATSH—FEIGNED DISEASE—DEPARTURE FROM CIRCASSIA—SINOPE—RUSSIAN CIVILITIES AND RETURNS TO THEM.

KHISSA, *4th October.*

MY DEAR ——. A few days before I left Abazak, cannon-firing was heard in the direction of Shapsuk. Immediately on hearing the sound, Osman, a noble of our party, set out to join in the warfare. I have since learned that it occurred during an early morning foray of the Russians, in which they unfortunately succeeded in capturing thirty-seven of the peasantry, notwithstanding that the valiant Ghezil Beg (who had recovered, and was again wounded) and others did their utmost to save them.

Zeúz Hûssein-okû Osman of Vardan, of whom I have just spoken, is one of the most valuable persons I know of in this country. He is brother of that gallant partisan-captain—as I believe I called him—Achmet, of whom I wrote you as having received me

in such noble style at his hamlet, shortly after my arrival in this country, and as having sacrificed a bullock in ratification of a bond of brotherhood between us, which bond, however, he appeared afterwards to have forgotten, in a manner I should not now enter upon, in conformity with the Roman maxim, "de mortuis," &c.; for he is gone "to his account," having fallen in the first ranks during those desperate charges on the Russians, while landing at Shakhe, of which I wrote you.

Osman, the oldest brother of that remarkably brave family (of whom but two out of five heroes now remain), equalled if not surpassed any of his brothers in intrepidity; for of few, indeed, among this warlike population are so many incidents illustrative of this quality recounted. With it, however, there are combined in his character others still more valuable; viz. wisdom, integrity, and modesty. For these reasons—so soon as I had opportunity of forming an opinion of the characters of the leading persons in this part of the country—I selected him as the chief medium for communicating to the other influential *tamatas* my ideas both in regard to the establishment of local and permanent magistracies, in place of the unwieldy and occasional judicial congresses, and to the concerting of means for procuring some counterpoise to the success of the enemy, the best of which still appeared to me the surprise of the Russian forts by night. He became a convert to both these suggestions; and although during the summer I took opportunity in the frequent visits paid me, and in my occasional meetings and journeys with

the chiefs, to speak of these measures on fit opportunities and with fit persons, yet I left to Osman the principal management of their promulgation. One of them, the establishment of the local magistracies, has already been carried so far into execution, as you have seen. I trust that the other may have like success, now that the fit season for its execution has arrived. I preferred Osman as a coadjutor in these measures, even to the Hadji; because I found the latter less patient in listening to the suggestions of others, on account of the native activity and energy of his disposition, which indispose him in no little degree for deliberation. He has heard my opinions on the subject of the local magistracies, and on most others connected with what I think beneficial for the country; but I am by no means prepared to say that the idea had not previously suggested itself to himself or some of his coadjutors. Upon the whole, I must say that on comparing the general conduct of the chiefs to the north with that of the chiefs of this portion of the coast, I have experienced from the latter less flattery and proportionably more sincerity. No attempt, moreover, has been made here at the tutelage of us, which the Tshûpakos and others in the north under their influence endeavoured to acquire.

Osman, brave as he is, has co-operated with me in what I cannot but consider also an object greatly to be desired: that of restraining the impetuosity of his countrymen, which has often led to their throwing themselves thoughtlessly upon the masses of the Russian army when formed with their artillery upon

level ground; by which means very many of the most valuable lives have been sacrificed to but little purpose, and discouragement occasioned in the inverse ratio. In this object also he has partially succeeded; and I trust and believe that the capture of a single fort by surprise will, if rightly managed, prove less costly in lives, and (as I have frequently told Osman and the rest) more than equivalent in giving confidence to the people and striking terror into their enemy, than all these desperate charges on the Russian armies, or than all the forays among the recreant Azras, and across the Kûban, which tend somewhat to injure their cause and character abroad.

The project of surprising the forts having been adopted, and as the season for it, as I have said, is now arrived, preparation for the enterprise is now in hand; and I have good hope of the first essay being made before the time of my purposed departure. Ten days ago—that is, on the 25th of last month—Osman paid me a visit; when we fully discussed the precautions necessary: such as the providing of scaling-ladders (these were found unnecessary) and spiking-irons (to be used or not as found advisable); the swearing of the party to act in concert; their requisite division into two or more parties, for distracting the attention of the garrison; and, above all, arranging for the attack being made while the sky is still dark. I now await the result of his combinations.

Hassan Bey has always assisted—especially of late—in promoting the objects now spoken of, and his advocacy of them on several occasions has been

extremely earnest and eloquent; but he belongs to the genus *elephas*—and his strength, though effective, is unwieldy.

On the 29th August I set out from Abazak for the coast, and had a painful journey (as indeed the former was, from the same causes) in consequence of great heat, rugged pathways, and fits of the ague; but the stimulus of the report of a vessel arrived at Makupse with letters and papers for me was not to be resisted.

The latter end of the last, and the beginning of this year have revealed to me a fearful "*preoccupation*" in England: what with Asiatic war, Spanish war, Canadian rebellion, the apparently interminable Egyptian question, and National and Corn-law Conventions. On the other hand, however, there arises a star of hope for the East in the Turkish and Austrian treaties with England, which, if rightly and firmly managed, must inevitably lead to a salutary checking of, or collision with, that "magnanimous" power which "places no confidence in the friendship of those whose interests do not accord with her own; and loses no opportunity of injuring them—without ostensibly violating treaties*."

Since my return here there has appeared an unusual calm in the Russian operations, which I know not whether to consider symptomatic of an exhaustion of expedients for subjugating this country, or prophetic of the gathering of another storm of war. The lateness of the season seems, however,

* See her chief historian Karamzin, the *authorised* promulgator in Russia of these political doctrines.

to render the undertaking of any considerable enterprise improbable. The squadron with the army sailed northward about the middle of last month, taking with it, moreover, as is said, a large portion of each of the garrisons of the forts on the coast. It is reported to have proceeded in the direction of the Crimea, along with the two steamers (one of which is said to have been burned at sea), and all the blockading cruisers. This much, however, is certain, that none of the latter have been seen for a considerable time; that the garrisons in general are of inefficient amount, and that the Circassians, as I have said, are planning the surprise of the forts.

The only further hostile attempt the Circassians appear to apprehend this season, is the construction of a fort on the hills between the valleys of Anapa and Semez; that is on the route by which the Russian army passed of late between these two. Before proceeding northward, the squadron gave us an alarm by approaching this échelle, but it is not probable that the coast will be further molested by it this season; therefore the commander-in-chief, Hadji Dakhûm-okû, has set out, three weeks since, with a force of chiefs and others to the Russian frontier, for the purpose of complying with the request of some chiefs of that province, who desired to be aided in removing with their households into Abazak, to a greater distance from Russian thraldom. After having effected this object the Hadji and his force will remain for some time in the latter province, aiding in the administration of the oath, and will not probably return home till the eve of winter. Reports

of war with Turkey are rife among the Russians; and it has been stated to me repeatedly—especially by an old chief whose word is considered unimpeachable—that, at the time the twenty-five sail and two steamers were lying off Waïa to receive the army, a fleet, at least four times as large, was seen from the hills, far off at sea making sail northward. The only probable inference appears to be that it must have been engaged in the transport of troops from Sûkûm-kaleh, or Redût-kaleh, who were returning from Persia.

Two letters which I addressed to the people in the north—one communicating the several reports we had received favourable to the country, from Turkey, Georgia, and Persia; and the other the confirmation, so far, of these reports, drawn from my letters and papers—are said to have diffused the liveliest satisfaction and confidence throughout that portion of the country. In Abazak the late rejection of General Sass' pacific offer, and the present administration of the oath, afford good promise of that province remaining steadfast; while all that I have of late written regarding the occurrences in this part of the country—which I consider the citadel of independence, both as regards the natural strength of the district and the extraordinary courage, hardihood, and spirit of its inhabitants—seems to render idle any apprehensions of its speedy submission. In short, however pressing the invitations have been for prolonging my stay in the country for yet another winter, I believe that, so soon as the project of surprising the forts is initiated, a safer juncture for my

leaving it will have occurred than for at least a year past. Yet it must not be forgotten that the general spirit of resistance, throughout the whole country, is contingent upon expectations from abroad, and that if these shall not, within due time, be realised, it may eventually break down.

Another favourable symptom for the country is, that that fatal embargo laid on its trade by the late Padisha appears to have been suspended or relaxed since his decease; for another goodly-sized vessel—in addition to that which brought my letters—has arrived at the same échelle; a third, still larger, at Agûïa, and a fourth at Jankhoti; and by these it is reported that *eleven* were preparing to start from Trebizond, and many others from other ports, the authorities merely telling those concerned that it was at their own risk they violated the Russian blockade—a risk to which the Turkish seamen have got used.

To finish the history of Ali-bí's Abazak excursion, I must tell you that about eight or ten days after my arrival here, he and his party also returned, evidently but little satisfied with the final amount of contributions made them after such delay. I found it to be as follows: for Ali-bí, individually, two serfs, seven horses, two coats of mail with armlets, one prime and richly-ornamented gun (estimated at the value of a serf), and two oxen. To *Zeûz* Hûsseinokû-Osman, the next most important personage, a prime horse (presented by general consent of the rest); and to the other friends and their serf-attendants, for *equal* division among them, two horses, two coats of mail, three armlets, and three cows.

Makupse, 28th.—On the 7th instant, after having waited at Vardan a month for the time fixed, I arrived here for the purpose of being at hand, if necessary, to sail by a tidy new vessel, rigged *à-la-européenne;* but no favourable wind has since occurred excepting on the 22nd and 23rd, when it blew from the east, but so stiffly that our captains (there are two) feared to put to sea (although a smaller and Turkish-built and rigged vessel did so), declaring that in such a high sea and wind (and they might have added with a heavy cargo and 120 passengers) their vessel was not safe; which interesting particulars I have learned only when too late for my making a change.

This long interval has not been destitute of news, and that of no little import. In the first place the fears of the people of the north of another invasion of their territory have been fully realised; for the Russian squadron, which sailed for the Crimea in August, returned about the beginning of this month to Anapa, and there landed a force which is estimated at 24,000 men, who have been marched to the eastward in that valley, and were there encamped (when my informant set out) for the purpose, as was supposed, of constructing another large fortification. In such a case the tillage and grazing of that large and fertile valley must in a great measure be abandoned by the Circassians; and as important routes of communication will also be interrupted, discouragement had prevailed to such an extent among a portion of the inhabitants of the district, that a question of peace arose among them. But their neighbours of

Shapsuk—although attacked about the same time, on the line of the Abûn, by a large force, which, notwithstanding very severe resistance, succeeded in destroying some hamlets and a considerable quantity of corn and fodder—sent them word that if they attempted making peace, they would but place themselves between two fires, and find in them more inveterate enemies than the Russians. Probably there may be exaggeration in this account, but the symptoms it reveals are sufficiently alarming.

On the other hand I have at length the gratification to announce that a beginning has been made here in the surprisal of the forts, which, although not entirely successful, will, I have not a doubt, lead to eventual and complete success, and thus countervail entirely the dispiriting intelligence from the north. The fort at Sashe was the one fixed on for the first experiment, for which its situation offered fully the greatest advantages; for hills on one side, and dense forests on two others, environ the fort so closely that the assailants could be assembled within but a few minutes' progress towards the object of their attack. These hills, moreover, afforded such near observation of the interior of the fort, that every one had opportunity of making himself familiar with its internal arrangements; while doing so myself, the nearest sentry had the complaisance to call out and warn my party to remove, otherwise they would be fired upon. Further opportunity of getting minute information had also been afforded to a noble in the service (horse-keeper) of my host, Hassan Bey, who had the *entrée* into the fort for the exchange of prisoners; reclaiming the

bodies of the slain, and such necessary and frequent intercourse with the garrison; for this garrison in particular had scarcely ever been allowed a week's respite, chiefly through the instrumentality of *Tshiz-mago* Omar, a lively young noble of the neighbourhood, who has always been foremost in every danger here, and who appears to have made it his peculiar hobby to do scath to this garrison by every means he could devise; setting ambushes for its sentries, surprising and capturing its gardeners, destroying its kitchen garden, &c., in pursuit of which recreations he has been known to absent himself from his wife and hamlet, though hard by, for months at a time.

The night of the 9th was fixed upon for the attack: about three hundred warriors were then assembled by Osman in the valley of Sashe, and every necessary arrangement (to which I have formerly alluded) having been made, the party advanced in their requisite divisions.

The assault was made about midnight, when from fifty to sixty of the younger men (among whom of course was Omar) scaled the (earthen) ramparts next the sea *without ladders*, and effected the surprise so completely, that but five of them were killed or wounded. The rest quickly put to the sword all the artillerymen they found stationed at the guns, and all the officers but one, fell among those who ventured to withstand the furious onset of the Circassians. The remainder of the garrison then betook themselves to the barracks for refuge, when the remaining officer cried out for a cessation of hostilities. After having thus made themselves masters of the fort, some of the

Circassians, while awaiting the junction of their friends, roamed round their new possession; some found their way into the stores, while others called loudly to their friends to come and reinforce them. To this appeal, Yakûb, one of these, most unwarrantably and injudiciously replied that no reinforcement could be sent, as most of those remaining outside had been either killed or wounded, and that the fort should therefore be evacuated. On receiving this unexpected and dispiriting intelligence—for the darkness, and the noise and bustle of the fight within the walls, had prevented all observation of what had occurred beyond them—the small band of captors hesitated to drive to desperation those of the garrison who had escaped, and who still outnumbered them by at least five to one; and thus eventually they resolved on renouncing a conquest they judged themselves unable to complete alone. The chief cause of this miscarriage was, that the five individuals who had been placed at the port-holes of the guns commanding the fosse, to pistol the gunners whenever they presented themselves, neglected that important duty, and thoughtlessly joined the scaling party; consequently the gunners, thus left unheeded, fired (with grape), when the fosse was filled with Circassians, most of whom were killed and wounded. This sudden slaughter struck such terror into the rest, that they hesitated in the enterprise, and betook themselves to rescuing the bodies of their friends; and the sum of disasters was of course increased when those in possession of the fort, by abandoning it, left the garrison free to resume the use of their arms. In

all twenty-three were found to have been killed, and about as many wounded.

Thus has failed, through the misconduct of a few individuals, an enterprise which wanted but little of entire success, but which nevertheless must have important results in encouraging the Circassians to other enterprises of the sort, and in proving to the Russian government the inefficacy of the means it counts upon for conquering and holding possession of this coast—means too which admit of but little improvement, for the construction of so many forts in stone would be a labour of much time, great cost, and still greater difficulty, and it is upon the whole such, I believe, as our opponents cannot think of undertaking.

Ever since the assault, the greatest industry and precaution have been used in the fort to prevent another attack. Artillerymen have been procured by contribution from the nearest forts; an engineer has been brought, who has caused the walls to be heightened and strongly palisaded; and during these operations, the guns have been frequently fired each night, to scare assailants!

1*st November.*—Since committing the above to paper I have had a visit from my young friend, *Tshizmago* Omar, who came to inform me that the folks to the south—far from being discouraged at the result of the late enterprise—have fully determined on making a similar attempt upon the fort at Ardler; and that it is only deferred on account of an express having arrived from Hadji Dakhûm-okû, who requests that they will wait the return of him and his party,

that they may participate in it. Osman (no doubt better engaged) has not been able to come and see me; nor can I now leave this neighbourhood to see him, lest the vessel I have determined to sail by should have an opportunity to depart during my absence; but I think I have completely impressed upon Omar a conviction of all that is wanted to make the next attempt upon the forts successful.

The indefatigable Hadji, I am happy to learn, has succeeded in initiating in Abazak (where I went to recommend it) the establishment of a local government similar to that of the coast I have already described; with this difference, however, that the magistrates have been chosen from the neighbouring members of the same fraternity, instead of indiscriminately, which circumstances may have rendered expedient, although it may not appear so.

As the Circassian volunteers are not punished for misconduct, the people of Sashe seek to console themselves for the failure in the capture of the fort by a song made in ridicule of him by whose mistatement and cowardly counsel it was occasioned. He may perhaps be thus sufficiently punished; for though somewhat weak in character, he is not without pride.

4th November, 1839.—This district I must register among those in which there still exist relics of Christian worship; observances similar to those I have formerly described in honour of *Merem* having occurred during my residence here. A statistical inquiry along the coast between Anapa and Gaghra would, I believe, show a nearly equal division of the

people into adherents to this ancient faith and to that of Islam. Which of these shall ultimately become supreme must, in a great measure, depend upon the future political fate of the country; for, as this hitherto integral, but minute, portion of human society must, to all appearance, be eventually absorbed by one or other of the neighbouring great Muscovite and Mussulman elements, upon the result of their conflict must the fate of the other depend. As yet, however, the equality I speak of is but numerical; for as the adherents of Mohammed join, to the general patriotic motive of defending their country, that of defending their religion (the motive by far the most generally and deeply felt throughout the Eastern world), their minds are proportionally imbued with a higher, and even holier, enthusiasm, which has gained for them a great moral ascendency, as is abundantly evinced by the progressive inroads their faith is making upon that of the rest, who, unable to assign "a reason for the faith that is in them," seem to have no other defensive barrier remaining but that of the "vis inertiæ" of bequeathed impressions—venerable, but weak from age.

Frequent reports of men and horses having been killed of late in passing the various forts on the coast —particularly those of Sûbesh and Toapse—give me somewhat nervous remembrance of past dangers in this respect. Since I and my cortège passed the former fort on my removal here a month since, *nine* men, besides sundry horses, have been killed by its guns alone; and it seems that such an amount of disaster was necessary to arrest the fool-hardihood

attending such exposure, and make the people open another route of *greater fatigue* and *less danger* across the hills.

The site of this fort—like those of most of the others — is in the embouchure of a little valley, flanked by two ridges of wooded hills; but whereas all the other hills afford, near the sea, paths more or less steep and obstructed, by which to make a circuit inland and avoid the fort-guns, that to the north of Sûbesh becomes, towards its termination, so rugged and precipitous as to be quite impracticable for passengers, who were compelled either to betake themselves to the beach, in the adventurous hope of passing harmless, or to seek another passage by a long detour inland, through as yet pathless thickets and over untractable rocks.

That portion of the beach (and its attendant hope) I would often fain have avoided; because the passing it, for about a quarter of a mile, is entirely at the tender mercies of the guns of a block-house erected at that corner of the fort, yet still nearer the sea. But, as the people themselves, in daily use of the route, had not, in spite of hard experience, become convinced of the expedience of opening a safer route, it might have been judged unseemly in me—situated as I am here—to have skulked by in the night, as did the women; or to have clamoured for the opening of another pathway. All therefore I could do in each passage was to discipline my generally large suite to the tactic of passing singly and somewhat rapidly; even in which simple process I had always to combat their *insouciance*.

Thus, on our last passage southward, not content with having escaped the danger of advancing for the distance described in a line perpendicular to the block-house, keeping our eyes every moment upon it so as to avoid the aim of the gunner upon seeing the priming explode, we had no sooner been permitted by the discontinuance of the precipice to the left to quit the impeding shingle and enter a little valley kindly sheltered by an eminence to the southward, than one of my people, instead of taking the usual mountain-track, galloped to a native reconnoitrer upon the eminence; and after exchanging with him a few words, hollowed to us to follow, which I did, in the hope that some nearer but safe route had of late been opened; instead of which I soon found, to my surprise and no little displeasure, that he who had thus assumed the direction was deploying our numerous party and its loaded horses on to the level and treeless circuit of the valley around the fort, and a long way within range of its guns, because he had learned that some others had of late done the like unharmed!

As my residence among these people in all probability now approaches its term, you will perhaps excuse my reporting a little more of the daily tattle, as further exemplification of their odd commerce in presents. Among other articles of this sort I bestowed on my late host at Khissa, was a fleet Kabardan horse, which—in like manner with a fine grey one I gave him formerly—he immediately destined for this trade; feeding it, together with another of his own, abundantly, and exempting both from all labour. At length the desired rotundity of

haunch was attained, when his wife set forth with the two cherished steeds for the hamlet of their friend Ali-bí—he, as you may remember, whom I accompanied into Abazak on his trading excursion there, with his *pkhûr*, or pupil—and who, on his return, had the misfortune to lose his eldest daughter; a misfortune that was speedily followed by those of the desertion of two of his serfs, and of some nine of his buffaloes, which latter, finding that they were left by their heedless herd-boy to their own discretion in the valley of Ardler, and that the herbage increased in luxuriance as they approached within range of the fort-guns, there remained, traitorously enjoying the enemy's pasture, until they were fairly made renegades of by the watchful soldiery. Ali-bí and his family of course received his friend's wife with becoming kindness and hospitality, and the present of the two steeds she had brought, with due acknowledgment of the beauty of their condition and the excellence of their points. Perfectly aware, however, of the more ample return expected from him, as a noble of the highest grade, he allowed it to be delicately understood, that he thought the *compliment* had been ill-timed, as his recent calamities had disqualified him, physically as well as morally, from addressing himself to the making of a suitable return; yet, in due time, he despatched homeward his fair visiter, accompanied by two serf-girls—a large expedition of whom for Turkey, Hassan has for some time been preparing—and a couple of buffaloes: thus divesting himself of a large proportion of the balance of gain his expedition to Abazak had afforded.

In the hope I shall ever cherish that this coast may yet be placed in friendly communication with Europe, it may be worth while to mention, that, in addition to the evidences of the presence of coal afforded at sundry localities on the coast, that mineral, of almost daily increasing value, was discovered in the excavations made by the Russian soldiers for constructing the fort of Sûtsha, and so near the surface, that it is now worked by them for fuel—the procurance of which in so handy and so central a locality must prove highly valuable for future steam-ship intercourse.

So far as I can learn here, previously to the surrender of Anapa, during peace, there resorted to that port in the course of the year about thirty vessels —Greek, Austrian, Italian, &c., carrying from ten to twelve thousand kilos (about two hundred tons burden). Spring and autumn—especially the latter, after harvest—were the best periods, and then full cargoes were obtained in twenty to twenty-five days, consisting of grain, hides, tallow, butter, honey, furs, &c., and from fifty to sixty passengers for each vessel. At that period, on the portion of the coast from Sûbesh to Gaghra, the annual arrivals were about sixty vessels of the above countries—generally on contract with merchants—carrying each from six to seven thousand kilos. In thirty to forty days they found full cargoes, consisting in part as above, but chiefly of boxwood, the best stations for which are from Hamish to Shemitwhatsh inclusive. They had also passengers to the amount of from fifty to two hundred each, according to the season of the year. Twenty

vessels per annum of smaller tonnage may be calculated on for the rest of the coast from Sûbesh to Anapa. Formerly small vessels, such as now trade, were almost unknown. At present passengers, both young and old, pay each (according to the supplies of themselves and of shipping) from forty-five to eighty piastres (on deck and providing for themselves) in sailing from this coast; from fifty to one hundred and thirty piastres in returning to it, and proportionably in both cases for their goods: and although many of them have further to pay about two hundred piastres for a deck-passage between Trebizond and Constantinople, and about one hundred piastres for the same accommodation between the latter city and Sinope or Samsûn, yet full cargoes of goods and passengers are obtained by all the vessels that arrive or depart; and the latter especially often carry from eighty to one hundred and twenty passengers, that is, as many as can possibly find standing-room. It may be safely calculated that there would be abundance of encouragement for a steamer plying between this coast and that of Turkey.

I cannot close these records without some tribute to my faithful attendant Luca, whom his attachment to Englishmen, and still more perhaps the deep interest he has come to feel in the Circassian cause and character, have induced to visit this country now for the third time, notwithstanding the suffering he always endures at sea, and the danger he thinks he has incurred of Russian malevolence; for although a native of Akhalzík, and thus born a subject of the Sultan, in whose territory he has always resided

since he came to manhood, he has taken it into his head to fear that the servants of the Russian Emperor may attempt to construct a claim to his allegiance. Although he has been occasionally impatient, yet the devotion and lively interest he has generally shown in promotion of the objects I have had in view in remaining so long among the Circassians, is alike creditable to them and to him. This, the first specimen I have met, gives me a favourable impression of the warmth and energy of the Georgian character.

As the time is arrived for my again running the gauntlet in departing in one of these crank-looking Turkish crafts, the winds, weather, and Russian cruisers, are now with me objects of chief and ceaseless observation, especially as I plainly perceive that the very numerous passengers—if not the captain and crew also—of the vessel I purpose going with, look for my English skill being exerted to determine when it will be most auspicious to embark. A fortnight ago, there were, for the first time since my arrival, two days of favourable wind, which assembled us all in the little rocky chink, where our vessel —with another skulker from Russian observation— is ensconced. But that wind set in too violently (from the east) for my having confidence in its continuance; wherefore, although I joined with those who voted for starting, in opposition to the captain and others, who feared to do so in view of the troubled white water before us—yet, doubtful of the continuance of the fair wind, and debilitated from a long course of fever and ague, I did not exert

myself to gain ascendency for our faction; which seemed to be as well, for after the second day (the first was too stormy) light breezes from the south again set in. But of the two evils—foul winds and hostile cruisers—the latter has become almost the chief, as Russian vessels, evidently on the watch for us, are to be seen almost daily in our offing; exhibiting a pertinacity of obstruction I have not before seen or heard of, and which inclines me to believe what I have been told—that I am the cause of this extraordinary solicitude.

Two days since I received, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a summons for embarkation, and having immediately bundled up the writings I was engaged with, I gave orders for packing, while I proceeded to the sea-side of a huge hill that rises behind our hamlet, to judge of the circumstances under which the summons had been given; and which I found not such as to warrant it. The wind, indeed, was favourable, being a light breeze from the N.W.; but immediately abreast of our valley, within about a dozen miles of it, was an old acquaintance—the three-masted cutter I was formerly chased by—and which I had observed, the day before, cruising back and forward in the same place; while off the coast, a little to the southward, lay a larger vessel, whose cable might, of course, be slipped at a moment's warning when we were observed launching our vessel; which, upon being drawn out from her chink of concealment, must have become visible both to these vessels and to the fort of Waïa, (whose gun-boat was not to be forgotten), near which the latter vessel lay.

In addition, however, to these arguments against embarkation, there was another, which, to my mind, greatly enhanced them—viz. the enormous amount of passengers our captains had engaged to embark, and to secure the whole of whom, and prevent them deserting to another more esteemed vessel lying at Sûkûkh, they had engaged to start on the evening of the day in question, whether or not the wind were favourable. It seemed thus to me that the lives, or, at all events, liberties of about a hundred and thirty individuals, nearly half of whom were women and children, whom these skippers in their greed had engaged to take in a little craft of about fifteen to eighteen tons burthen, and confessedly crank and bad as a sea-boat, were to be now placed in jeopardy upon no more material consideration than that of more or less freight-money; as fully half of these passengers had expressed their determination to depart next day for the other vessel. I thought therefore that an opportunity had now occurred for responding to the confidence my friends had placed in my nautical judgment; and immediately on returning to our hamlet, I sent down word to those congregated at the vessel that I did not think it advisable then to sail, and would not do so. A message was speedily returned, both from the captains and passengers—in fact, from the two factions, pro and con, into which the whole body had become divided—begging earnestly that at all events I would come down to the creek; and although hourly in expectation of the recurrence of my fever, yet the crisis seemed too important for such a consideration.

I even took my baggage down with me, to prove my disposition to embark, in case circumstances should become more favourable towards evening. Arrived at the vessel, I found that, to prove the determination of embarking, she had been hauled out of her cranny of concealment on to the sea-beach, which was occupied with numerous parties in earnest debate about the propriety of launching her. After some debate with two or three of the most sage and influential among the individuals assembled, I found that, as is usually the case with large deliberative bodies of men, their minds were floating in suspense, and waiting for direction being given them by the few who could think or act with decision and energy. The enemy's vessels were still in their former positions, but the one at anchor showed preparation for weighing; the wind, though still favourable, was but light. The sun was now fast setting, and in the subsequent darkness it seemed but a toss-up whether or not we should fall in with one or other of the cruisers, the smaller one of which lay almost directly in the course we should have to take, and must of course have been in much better sailing trim than our vessel, cumbered with such an unmanageable deck-load of live-stock. My opinion thus remained unchanged, or was indeed confirmed, by the strong apprehensions expressed by an old captain among the passengers, who, with another, had had a large amount of "womankind" entrusted to his care. The only question for me, therefore, was how I could best influence the opinions of the rest, and rescue them from the double danger of capture and overloading to which they were about

to be exposed so unnecessarily. For this purpose, I had the captains called into the little conclave now formed around me, that the whole affair might be reasoned on publicly; but I soon found that their endangered pecuniary interests had superseded with them all other considerations, and I therefore taxed them roundly with cowardice and avarice, in having formerly feared to put to sea when the wind was fair, their cargo moderate, and the coast clear, and in now showing such determination to do so, for the sole purpose of preventing a defalcation among the passengers they had engaged with to so improper an amount, and whom they were about to expose to such danger for no reason but that of their private gain. In reply to all this, one of them expressed his contempt of the cruisers, and the other, with greater tact, in order to bring me into contempt as an unbeliever, exclaimed, "It is the will of God." To this phrase, so hackneyed and perverted among Mussulmans, I knew it to be somewhat hazardous (so far as argument was concerned) to reply amidst a body of fatalists; yet, as the case demanded the experiment, I answered that we all knew that everything depended on the will of God, yet that it was no business of his to adduce that argument, but to make the best use of what judgment had been given him for the safety of all concerned. "You may go or stay as you please, but we will go, with or without passengers," was their reply, as they marched off, shouting to the men who had been engaged in the launching, to continue their labour. With such men and the sun already below the horizon, there was neither time nor fitness for

further argument; therefore I rose, and as loudly as themselves ordered my baggage out of their vessel, at the same time going down to superintend its return, that all might see, amidst the twilight, what my determination was. And the effect I wished to produce was not long of becoming apparent. First, the "yo-hoes" of the workers were abated; then the craft was brought to a halt in her progress, and, lastly, a humble suggestion was propounded on the part of the captains, that my things might be left on board, as the launching should not take place that evening! Having thus gained my point, I could afford to do them a good turn by declaring my intention not to abandon them, and suggesting to the rest that as the captains had remained for our safety, they should do the same. Yet, as was to be desired and expected, a considerable portion—that is, about half the passengers — have gone off for the other vessel, leaving us still as many as we can conveniently make the passage with.

Tuesday, 5th.—As the devoted Notwhatsh is again the seat of hostilities, I have been extremely anxious to obtain information of what passes there, once more before my departure; and on this account the arrival yesterday of a young noble of this part of the coast, whose respectability renders trustworthy the news he brings from that quarter, has afforded me much gratification. A large congress has been held at Hatekaï, a valley on the south side of the Bakhan; between which congress and that much more numerous and greatly different one, presided over by Lieutenant-General Rayevski, and now assembled in the valley

of Anapa, various communications appear to have been passing; the first of which I presume—for our young informant was not very precise or copious in his details — was another invitation to submission from the general, accompanied, according to the odd practice recently adopted, by an intimation beforehand of the task that had been prescribed him by his imperial master; viz. that he should this season complete the construction of a fort where he then was, and then retire, and that next season he should establish two others upon the coast. To these intimations and invitation the reply of the Circassian congress was short and peremptory;—that, however many forts he might construct, no peace should be made with him.

By the same opportunity I learn, that of the many vessels of late arrived in the bay of Semez—with stores for the fort I presume — three had been wrecked there.

Monday, 11*th*.—Within these few days we have had evidence here of the dearth of merchandise which already prevails in the north, whence large flocks of sheep and goats, brought all this way along the beach, yet in the primest order, have been sent for the purpose of being exchanged (at the opening of each valley) for such *bezes* and *allajas** as the inhabitants choose to part with. The prices are exorbitantly high, in comparison with what I have usually known paid per head; yet the highly fed condition of these flocks has tempted many to purchase; and the carcasses we have cut up here seem

* Turkish manufactures—the former plain, the latter coloured— both in constant demand.

ENGRAVING ON AN ANCIENT SILVER CUP.

such as might have gained prizes at Holkham. A foray, I am sorry to learn, has been effected on the very level and unprotected plains towards the mouth of the Abûn, in which above a couple of thousand sheep, belonging to the poor people of that district, have been carried off by the Russians.

A very well-behaved young Turk, who resides in this glen and frequently visits me, brought with him, on two or three occasions, an equally well-bred boy, the mild yet lively and intellectual expression of whose features would have excited my interest in him even if he had not been lame, (which misfortune, in early youth, seems to call for greater sympathy, by how much more that is the season activity is delighted in,) and if I had not come to know something of his history. The young man is the agent of a Turkish merchant, and in the purchase of this boy he had invested a portion of the property which had been intrusted to him; and as the lameness had occurred, or become evident, after the purchase, he feared being blamed for not having used sufficient precaution; on which account my interest in curing the boy, or at least in giving such advice as might bring the young man out of the dilemma, was sought to be excited. But having, in the course of discussion, learned that the boy had been captured during a foray into one of the renegade provinces to the eastward;—that he was of gentle, that is, noble birth, and that he desired to be returned homewards, all my sympathies were of course immediately transferred from the merchant to the merchandise; and although I could not in conscience carry this so far as to pro-

nounce that there was blemish where I verily believed there was none, I yet felt at liberty to prescribe for the knee in case of mistake, and strongly to advise the young man, on several opportunities, to return the boy upon the hands of him from whom he had him. Yesterday, however, I learned, that the little fellow, either through an impulse of honesty or a relaxation in his aversion from going to Constantinople, had himself put it out of my power to serve him. The young man, to avoid blame, carried him to *another* doctor, with whom he was on the point of closing a contract for the payment of three hundred piastres for the cure of the leg, when the boy, after having most heroically made semblance for two or three weeks of its being as inflexible as if it had been made of wood, suddenly called the young man aside, and told him to keep his money, as nothing whatever ailed his leg, which he gave immediate proof of by walking unhaltingly back to their lodgings, to the great delight of his owner. This is the only instance I can at present recollect, as having come under my observation, of disinclination having been shown by any male or female to being taken to Turkey, which appears to be in general looked to by Circassians as the land of promise.

Since my return to this part of the coast I have experienced a very severe mortification with respect to antiquarian research. About a year ago a man, who resides three or four hours' distance inland from Sashe, while ploughing his ground discovered a small pit, in which he found buried a vast variety of articles of great value. Among others there have been men-

tioned to me a large silver basin and ewer; several small gold and silver figures; bowls, bracelets, and necklaces, of the same metals; gold, silver, and copper coins, sufficient, as is said, to fill the bonnets of two men, &c. Immediately on hearing this account I begged that whatever remained of these articles might be brought to me, and in a few days a man arrived with the remainder; viz., a bracelet formed of a thick wire, very ductile from the purity of the gold, with triangular compartments at each end, in which were set jaspers adjoining the hook and eye for clasping; a short thick neck-chain of the same metal (with a hook and eye at each end) passed through the centre of a buoy-shaped ornament, thickest in the middle and diminished toward each end, and set with jaspers in chased compartments;—the half of a small silver bowl; and a few copper coins so corroded from age that I cannot decipher them. The whole of the rest of these curious relics of antiquity had been disposed of, those of gold and silver for the purpose of being melted and used for the ornamenting of arms! Half of the bowl had been sold to be melted, and in cutting it for that purpose a rent had been made in the remaining portion. Those who take interest in such subjects will find in the drawing I have made an exact copy of all that remained of the engraving the bowl had been adorned with; and to these antiquarians I leave to determine the epoch (evidently very remote) "of a troublous world," when this treasure was restored to its mother earth for safety.

The ague to which I have alluded, and from which,

though a malady greatly prevalent in this country, I had hitherto escaped, made its first attack upon me on the 4th of August, and I am tempted to detail its progress in my case, in order that you, or any one so situated as I have been, may have recourse to the same most efficacious cure. Great heat towards the end of July was followed by thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain, *à plusieurs reprises*, during three nights and days; the unwholesome effects of which alternations (which many then suffered from), combined with those produced by the imprudence of frequent bathings, both in fresh and salt water, during three days of the greatest heat, at length told upon me in a slight attack of cold and fever, which latter operated chiefly against my head, in frequent recurrence of headache, and of a species of delirious affection, through which I was impelled, as it seemed, in spite of my determinations to arrest it, to the composition, with a fluency that amazed me, of long blank verse and special pleading harangues, in emulation of what I had been previously reading in Shakspeare and some London journals. Three days afterwards the ague declared itself by its well-known and most oppressive symptoms; when, having had recourse to the small remaining stock of medicine (about a couple of doses of quinine, &c.) I had reserved, amidst numerous applications, in case my servants or I should be attacked, I set out forthwith for Abazak, in the belief that exercise might aid in curing me, as seemed to prove the case. On the 25th of August, however, the ague returned; but the medicines were done, and I had no other resource

than trying again the effect of the journey back to the coast, which, although performed with no little suffering from heat, and cold, and rocky and most precipitous roads, had yet the desired effect of arresting the malady. But it again recurred on the 24th September, and continued, in spite of the journey here, until five days ago, when, after a few days of its gradual relaxation in severity, and a proportionable recurrence of strength and appetite, it finally beat a retreat from my almost exhausted citadel. This victory I attribute entirely to willow-bark, which one of my countrymen, Nadir Bey, had casually mentioned as a substitute for quinine, but which information I had unluckily forgotten until shortly before my cure, when I set determinedly to work, with strong and copious doses of its infusion, some half-dozen of which, taken as quinine should be, shortly before the periodical return of the fever, sufficed to expel it. I can the more confidently recommend this specific that my dragoman, who suffered even more severely than I from ague, was cured of it, equally speedily and efficaciously, by the same means. By the experience of both of us, it appeared to be a special promoter of appetite.

At sea, Saturday 16th.—On the afternoon of Wednesday last I received so short and unexpected notice for embarkation, that I had but barely time sufficient to equip myself, ascend our mountain for a look-out, and ride down to the vessel before sunset; and the bustle was so continued, and so mingled up with embracings, protestations of friendship, last speeches and injunctions, from those left behind,

that it was not until we were fairly out at sea, and fast floating onwards from the Circassian shores, that the feelings such a circumstance, after so long and interesting a residence, was calculated to produce, gained their due ascendancy. I shall leave them, however, to your imagination. From the mountain I had seen the sea entirely free from cruisers, and had observed such tokens as gave me hope that the light favourable breeze which had set in would be permanent. And such it has been in regard to direction, but, in regard of power, it has twice failed us at our greatest need, and caused us thus no little anxiety—first, at about a dozen miles from shore, when it would have been an easy feat for the Waïa gun-boat to have followed and captured us; and secondly, yesterday morning about ten, when a gleam of sunshine was reflected from the white sails of a large vessel right in our wake about ten miles distant, and on the same tack as ourselves. In both cases the oars were put in vigorous requisition; and, in the latter one, soon left our pursuer—if such she were—below the horizon; when, the breeze having freshened, I suggested some alteration of the course, the captain told me to order whatever I thought proper, and by our going for a time a little *freer*, we were by-and-by, as we believed, beyond all danger of boat-pursuit.

But I am omitting to insert, in its proper place, an incident of unexpected occurrence, and of surpassing gratification. The greater part of Thursday had been so overcast, that I had ceased hoping for a view of the higher mountains, which continued

enveloped in a dense mass of clouds. Shortly before sunset, however, these clouds were somewhat suddenly removed, and the magnificent spectacle was vouchsafed to me, of Elbrûz, "giant of the eastern star," seated aloft amid his courtier-mountains, whose silvery robes glittered gorgeously in the golden beams of the evening. I could, in the excitement of the moment, almost have fancied that the Guardian-spirit of the land had thus deigned to gratify me, in reward for my humble endeavours for its benefit; and for an hour or so my mind wandered amid reveries over the past, present, and future fate of that land of historical romance, mingled with many glowing recollections of the hospitable hamlets of many friends whom I was parting from, perhaps for ever. Next morning, at sunrise, I was again favoured with a view of these most picturesque mountains—which reduced to insignificance those behind Gaghra I had been accustomed to look on as lofty;—but it was but a brief *forget-me-not* glimpse, when they were again enshrouded in vapour. And for such occasional spectacles of the glories of the mountains, heaven, or ocean, I have no occasion to take further trouble, even during bed-time, than that of turning myself on my couch, which is here but two crazy pieces of board laid from gunwale to gunwale above the tiller; so that I have not only the benefit of free vision all around, but that also of all the wind and rain which may be going. To this arrangement—not the most agreeable at sea in the month of November—I have been obliged, through civility, to submit, in order that the females, who form about half of the fifty

passengers we still have, may enjoy the whole of such accommodation as is to be found below deck. But hitherto the weather has been favourable, and the wind so fair, though light, until now that it is rising, that we have already (9 A.M.) a view of the lofty hills on the Asiatic coast, near the Kizil-irmak, which cannot be much more than about fifty miles distant.

Off Sinope, Monday 25th.—Since writing the above, I think I have suffered more hardship than has yet—ague excepted—fallen to my lot in the service of Circassia; aggravated as that hardship has been by the encounter of difficulties where none were expected. The easterly wind freshened somewhat too much on the evening and throughout the night of the 16th, when we had no longer need of such increase, from being so close in upon the land that there came to be danger in the dark of running foul of some of its prominences—that increase revealing, too, the exceeding crankness of our vessel; the danger of capsising which—by the mere inadvertence of two or three people going to the lee-side of it—made the captains several times cry out in angry reproof. Most of the night we "lay to," in a tumbling sea, off the cape of the Kizil-irmak. But next morning the wind was first so light, and then so unfavourable, that after innumerable tacks, and much rowing, we had to cast anchor at sunset at sundry miles short of Gherzeh, where we received from a Turkish naval officer the disagreeable intelligence of strict quarantine, and denouncement of punishment against those engaged in prosecution of the proscribed trade with Circassia; which intelli-

gence cast a sudden gloom over all—an odd contrast to the joy that should have been exhibited at safe arrival on a friendly shore. On arriving off Gherzeh on the 18th, a quarantine officer immediately came alongside; and, among other items of information, took down the name of every individual on board, intimating to us, at the same time, strict orders to hold no communication with the shore; and that we had to perform a quarantine of eighteen days, the bare thought of which—with my exposed berth, our crowded and now filthy decks, and most unsavoury hold—was most dismaying.

It appeared to me however possible, that these novel regulations, so much more Russian than Turkish in aspect, might be a special stretch of authority against the Circassian traders only, at the instigation of the new Russian consul established at Sinope. I therefore deemed it well to let the Pasha of that place know that he had an Englishman in hand, in case of any irregularity being attempted, and accordingly determined on sending him a letter to inform him, in civil terms, that our vessel was one for which I had sent to bring me over; that I should prefer performing quarantine at Sinope; and that if any extraordinary rigours were adopted against the people of the vessel —as I had heard threatened—I should be obliged to consider them as directed against myself, and make them a subject of representation to our ambassador.

The quarantine officer was the only scribe to be had, and in the evening he civilly came aboard and sat down *among us* to act in that capacity; yet it

was not without some difficulty, not without the semblance of getting out of temper, that I could get him to transcribe the most material part of the letter; viz. its concluding portion, until arriving at which his pen flowed on through the more gentle and civil expressions like a vessel descending a stream, and then stopped at the semblance of a threat, as if brought to by a "snag". I compounded matters a little with him. By this time rain had set in; it continued, accompanied by very cold wind, almost without intermission for two nights and two days; our only boat got staved in our helping ourselves to wood and water at an unfrequented part of the coast; and the Circassians on deck (where there was no shelter but a slight awning erected abaft), being now deprived of all necessaries by the inattention of the people on shore, got mutinous, and expressed their determination to land, and rather to perish sabre in hand than submit to such treatment; to which determination they had been excited by some of their countrymen on shore calling out to them; "These people are become infidels; land and make your way to the coffee-house." I counselled them to be patient, and fortunately early on the 20th, in answer to my letter, an intimation arrived for our proceeding to Sinope. By 2 P.M. we were under weigh, and having had supplies furnished us from the shore, we hoisted sail, and a little after sunset were at anchor off Sinope. But our first specimen of our new locality was far from encouraging. At dawn of the 21st we perceived the higher mountains capped with snow; a bitter and violent wind set in from the east; not a

morsel of wood, and but little more water remained for cooking; and as we stood on the comfortless deck shivering and pitching in a heavy sea, and roaring shoreward for wood and water, we were further tantalised by seeing the folks there busied about their usual avocations, and, totally heedless of our plight, saving some Circassians who now and then came on a jetty, and seemed to pity, but to be unable to aid us.

Sinope, 28th.—Through the influence, I believe, of the Russian consul lately installed here, we were forced to remain in the bay on board our little craft—fifty-six men, women and children, exposed to little less hardship than I have spoken of—for four days more. During this time, however, our numerous friends on shore contrived to keep us supplied with an abundance and variety of cooked dishes, fruit, &c., besides sugar, coffee, lanterns, and other new luxuries. I had a feeling, moreover, of having again got into the portion of the world I had been long excluded from, by seeing steamers arrive and depart, and in picking up some news occasionally from the boats that passed between the shore and the many other vessels riding in the bay. Yet these *soulagemens* could not compensate for the hardship of such crowding and exposure, day and night, as we had to suffer on board, and I made repeated and strenuous efforts for permission to land, to all which, however, I could get no answer from the substitute of the Pasha, (who was absent,) than the convenient and oft-used "bakalum"—*voyons*. On the 24th, however, the Pasha arrived from Constantinople, and landed

under a great explosion of powder from his steamer and the town battery. I determined immediately on sending him another letter, and succeeded at length in carrying my point, notwithstanding many remonstrances from his functionaries that a verbal communication would serve as well as a written one, and the great unwillingness of another custom-house scribe to have any participation in addressing anything like a threat (though civilly couched) to such a personage as a Pasha. This dispute I was again obliged to compound by agreeing that the rough scroll of the letter, with my seal appended, should be sent as a ship-board production, instead of the fair copy the scribe had purposed making on shore. Next morning permission to land was issued, and the eagerness with which the females especially crowded from the one craft to the other that was brought to take us on shore, afforded further proof of what they had suffered.

Here however no arrangements have yet been made for performing the newly established quarantine on shore; consequently, the whole fifty of us, males and females, have been crammed into a large unfinished house, with slight partitions of boarding by way of rooms (all without ceiling save mine) in the upper story; while the basement is but a dark, waste, unfinished warehouse, the great gate of which is kept locked upon us day and night by a guard outside, and never opened but by special request for the entrance of provisions and water. None of the windows are glazed, still the atmosphere of our house is so impure from the crowd within it, that I have

often regretted having left my windy berth in the vessel. The best and only tolerable apartment has been assigned to me and my attendants; but, in pity to the rest, I feel obliged still to submit to the inconvenience I suffered in Circassia in holding levees daily, and to allow them to use one of my windows which commands the court-yard, to communicate with the crowds of their countrymen and friends who assemble there.

Our friends in the town keep us, as formerly, abundantly supplied with all the delicacies it affords: many of the dishes sent us are excellent; among others some butterfly-things of pastry, which one might blow away, but for the honey their wings are clogged with. I generally club my supplies with those of two Turkish merchants, and we thus have tolerably handsome picnics daily. One of our party is on his pilgrimage to Mecca. He is a native of Bokhara, and as he was robbed of everything he had provided for his journey, on his passage through Russia, and is a modest, inoffensive, cleanly person, (very devout,) I have made him my guest. I learn from him that he heard on his way that the Russians had a contest with the Kirghiz, in which they were worsted.

5th December.—An English and a Swiss gentleman, with some others whom I have seen here, report that they heard that orders had been issued to the commanders of the Russian cruisers, by the Emperor himself, during his visit to Georgia, that whoever captured should immediately hang me: the Russian consul moreover (as I afterwards learned) exerted his *authority* with the Pasha to get me—as well as all those

who accompanied me—thrown into prison; and I have since had reason to believe that I was only saved from this inconvenience by my having an English passport, about which the Pasha took means to inform himself immediately on my landing. But one of the captains of the vessel who had been in my service in Circassia, and sent thence by me to hire her in case others were not coming, was incarcerated four days ago, immediately on our quarantine being finished. Since then, however, I have had an opportunity not only of gaining a little influence personally, but of crippling the influence of my antagonist, by revealing to the Pasha, and the other good folks here, the slight that ha been put upon them by the appointment, as Russian consul, of a servant who had been turned out of the establishment of an English gentleman for disreputable conduct. I wrote the Pasha another somewhat testy letter, in regard to the imprisonment of my captain, and not only he, but another from Circassia, were immediately set at liberty. The subsequent conduct both of the Pasha, and of the governor of the town, has proved their desire that I should not have any complaint against them; while the increased attentions of the Circassians, and of the Turks engaged in the Circassian trade—large levees of whom I have to hold daily—show that their ideas of my influence have greatly outstripped its reality. I have succeeded however in getting orders issued, that the passengers by another vessel from Circassia, which has just arrived, shall be immediately landed; instead of being kept at sea exposed to the inclemency of the weather as we were, for the gratification of the spleen of the Russian function-

ary. It is much to be regretted that some Englishman is not resident here, to check by his presence (and his correspondence) the pettifogging which may always be expected wherever a Russian agent is established. There is no plea for the residence of the one here, but that of tyrannising over the traders to Circassia; for so far as I can see, the whole foreign trade of the place is English.

We have just had another arrival here; viz. that of a French war-steamer with the Count de Sercey and his numerous retinue, on their way to Persia, where the Count goes on an embassy the precise purport of which, at this juncture, I have some difficulty in conceiving. Immediately on the landing of these gentlemen I was urgently and repeatedly (having been detained a little) sent for to go to the palace and meet them, for the purpose of being introduced; but chiefly—as it seemed to me—that the French captain and I might together inspect the 106 gun-ship now on the stocks, and report our joint observations to the Pasha, whose present hobby appears to be ship-building. His palace stands on one side of the ship-yard, where much of his leisure appears to be spent. Our report of the ship was favourable, as regards mould and workmanship; but we agreed in condemning the wood as greatly too little seasoned. Much improvement might also be introduced in regard to its transport from the interior; as the only means at present employed are dragging the logs over rollers by the aid of fifty to sixty pair of oxen, and twice as many men, in which rude operation two or three months are frequently required for the removal of a single large tree. To remedy

this impediment I gave the Pasha a drawing of the machine in use in our dockyards, and one of the Austrian steam-boat captains undertook to superintend its construction; yet I doubt if any reformation will be speedily introduced. The Count took me on board to dine with him, but unused as I had long been to the delicacy of such cookery as his table displayed, I was much more highly gratified by the eager interest displayed by him and his party both about the Circassians and the state of their affairs, which interest was further revealed by the extreme kindness of their reception and the urgency with which they begged me to allow them to supply any want I might have as regards money or clothes. Here however a mortification awaited me, in seeing that the steamer was armed; and in reflecting on the degrading conditions imposed on that which bore our ambassador Lord Durham, on entering the Black Sea. The treaty through which this disgrace was perpetrated against us must be abrogated, especially now that it has become known that a portion of the shores of the Black Sea appertains to a state entirely independent either of Russia, which dictated that treaty, or of Turkey, which was obliged to submit to its conditions.

The abrogation of that treaty is rendered further necessary, in consonance with that portion of the treaty of Vienna, which stipulates for the free navigation of all great rivers in Europe that flow through the territories of more than one state; for to what purpose does Austria possess the free navigation of the Danube, so long as the Euxine is for her a "mare clausum" in respect of all protection to her trade?

Indeed it appears to me—considering the greatly changed circumstances connected with the Black Sea —to have been a great oversight in those concerned in framing the treaty of Vienna not to have given full effect to the free navigation of the Danube, by placing the straits of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus on the same footing as the other navigable streams of Europe. This must yet be done; otherwise our own great trade by the Black Sea to Persia (not to mention other openings in the Danube, &c. that may soon become valuable) must continue to be impeded —as it has so frequently been—by our great northern rival.

The arrival from the Crimea of a trading vessel belonging to one of the Turkish ministers, has furnished unexpected intelligence in regard to Circassia; for Luca overheard her Greek sailors telling some of their countrymen that about 500 wounded Russians had been brought to the Crimea from Anapa. Doubtless they formed a portion of the great force under General Rayevski, which was encamped in the valley of Anapa when I left the Circassian coast.

Constantinople, 30th.—I sailed from Sinope on the 13th, and having previously assembled all the leading Circassians there at a farewell supper, they repeated their previous and frequent representations of the great hardship they all were enduring, and the utter destitution to which many of them had been reduced, through the successful influence of the Russian consul, in getting their return to Circassia prevented during some months, unless on condition of their accepting Russian passports for Anapa, which they had firmly refused, as an acknowledgment of

Russian supremacy. Urgent representations were also again made of their dependence on me to extricate them from these difficulties. Here also I have found a large number of Circassians (according to the returns made me they amount in all to about a hundred) who have come here on trade, and have been reduced to the same predicament through similar influence and for the same purpose. The representations made to me at Sinope have been repeated here during the large levees of these Circassians and of their Turkish friends, which I have had to hold almost daily since my arrival. I forbear however to mention the measures I have taken and shall take for their relief, lest our watchful antagonist countervail us.

12*th February*, 1840.—My anticipations of the successful prosecution of the project of capturing the Russian forts by surprise, have so far received most gratifying confirmation. Two Turkish vessels have just arrived in the Bosphorus from Sûkûm-kaleh; and as a report immediately arose of the fort of Sashe having been again captured by the Circassians, I sent my dragoman to cross-question the informants. They distinctly state that this capture of the fort was the second; that it occurred some time before their departure from Sûkûm (where every one spoke of it); viz. towards the end of Ramazan, or the first week in December; that it was entirely successful, all the garrison, guns, and ammunition having fallen into the hands of the captors; and they specified the names of several Circassians (well known to us) who had been killed or wounded in the action.

SINCE my return to England in the middle of last May, intelligence has continued to arrive from so many different quarters (including Russia), and has received such corroboration in the correspondence of the English consuls nearest the seat of war, that there can no longer be any reasonable doubt of the Circassians having captured, within *three months*, almost all the forts on their coast, the establishment of which had been the sole achievement effected by the great naval and military force employed by Russia during the *four* preceding *years*, at a vast expense both of blood and treasure.

The admiration and praise which these gallant exploits of the Circassians have elicited from all the public journals — excepting the few whose editors are bound by contract to keep the current of their feelings within prescribed embankments—and which they must excite in every one whose nature is not chilled by selfishness, or warped by party-prejudice, render it superfluous or impertinent for me to attempt expatiating on them. Not so, however, with regard to the application of the intelligence in question, to the use and purpose to which every one alive to the endangered interests of England and of humanity —to the precarious positions of Turkey, of Persia, and of the heterogeneous and inflammable masses composing the population of Central Asia—should endeavour to turn it; viz. to awaken his countrymen from the lethargy, indifference, division, and despair, as respects external interests, into which *Party*, that cancer of society, has thrown them; so that at this moment, when the political atmosphere around England is becoming silently charged with

elements of more fearful portent than perhaps ever yet menaced the state-vessel, not an eye is raised above the bulwarks, nor a glance cast over the reckonings, save by him to whom, with that dementation which is said to precede ruin, all charge has been abandoned.

Let any one desirous of really knowing our condition take for his landmark any one subject of foreign interest, and on mingling but a little in society he must be constrained in candour to own, that it engages the interest of him only whose pursuits it does or may effect, or who hopes to find in it promotion for some small and especial object, which the fraction of the community to which he has attached himself seeks to attain; while its general and permanent results, the principles it affects, are entirely unknown or lost sight of.

Circassia, however, stands isolated in these respects, for although politically invaluable her position, any material interest connected with her individually is only prospective; and thus the achievements of the Circassians are contemplated with the same abstract admiration that one would accord to a comet or any other celestial phenomenon, affecting a region beyond our sympathy and concern; and this too while the Moscovite is in full career for Herat (having sent us a sleeping-potion on the way in exaggerated tales of the disasters attending his *first* attempt, and having secured a clear field for his enterprise, by destroying our influence in Persia, and procuring the departure of our able and justly-feared ambassador), in order to counteract the moral effects of our military operations in Central Asia, which his previous machinations in Persia had forced us to adopt!

But our Briaræan antagonist, not content with such preparation for his success, seeks to distract our attention by every other means in his power, and to this end excites rebellion in our colonies; instigates the remote Chinese, by means of his missions established among them, to force war upon us through insult; and, by way of securing another great stake in the game of his ambition—until the time shall arrive for his devoting attention to it exclusively—creates jealousy between England and France (whose union formed his greatest danger), and our participation with him in prolonging the dissensions in Turkey, which, but for such interference, would immediately be compounded to the restoration of the strength of both parties, and the reconsolidation of the Mussulman interests in general.

But what—it may be asked—is to be done? Are we to plunge at once into war, for remote interests and future contingencies? No—that is not necessary; and we may be assured, moreover—since war has become for us an idea so repugnant—that of war (with Russia, at least,) there is no danger, nor even chance, so long as we shall be content with a repetition of apology upon every repetition of insult. But if we wisely seek to avoid war, let us wisely take means to destroy the causes of it; which means do not consist (as the history of the world may teach us) in professions of benevolence and moderation on our part, but in the proof our conduct may afford of our indisposition to submit to insult, and in our state of preparation to right ourselves. None knows better than Russia that the very rumour of war or of disagreement with England, would paralyse instantane-

ously her whole external power and influence, and reveal at once the weakness she so sedulously seeks to conceal by the loud and arrogant tone with which on every suitable occasion she parades her preparation for hostilities. Her strength lies in our forbearance; and only in proportion as the one is exerted will the other become formidable. Letters from a foreigner of eminent military rank and judgment, which have been published lately, communicate intelligence *obtained in Russia* of the late reverses experienced by her on the western side of the Caucasian provinces, and the alarm thence arising of war being resumed by others towards the east having caused the withdrawal, towards these points of danger, of the whole of the force usually kept in readiness to act on Constantinople, when circumstances shall render that advisable. Hence the distraction she has caused in the Egyptian question, and between England and France. A glance at a map, and a moment's reflection, may prove to any one how vastly improved will be the condition of Russia for aggressive purposes when the flame of freedom shall have been finally extinguished throughout the regions of the Caucasus. Then may her eagles there plume themselves afresh, and start with renovated vigour toward Olympus, the plains of the Euphrates, or the peaks of the Hindû-kûsh. If, however, we so greatly fear war, now is there opportunity—procured for us by the heroic Circassians, who are fighting *our battles*,—wherein, without danger, we may (instead of dabbling in the comparatively trifling squabble with Egypt) enforce our right to the navigation of the Euxine, as of every other common sea. Now is

the time for our cancelling the fraudulent and fictitious cession which Russia compelled Turkey to make to her of Circassia—for requiring fulfilment of her solemn engagements not to make (in consequence of her war with Turkey) any accession to her territory, nor to seek any exclusive advantage—for demanding that (according to the established principles of international law) she shall no longer impede our commerce by a blockade of the Circassian coast, which has never been either legally proclaimed or legally enforced.

But if we shrink from availing ourselves of the favourable crisis that has now occurred, let us not console ourselves with the belief that a similarly advantageous one may hereafter occur. The Circassians are as yet totally unaware of, nor could they perhaps comprehend, the prostration of national feeling and national force with which England appears to be at present afflicted, through the individual egotism which the long pursuit of wealth and individual advantage has produced; and the fatal extremity to which party-spirit has arrived. But the vantage-ground which their firmness and prowess has gained them for making terms with their antagonist must not be lost to them, nor their blood be shed to no purpose, if the hope be really vain of England being awakened to the vindication of her rights and of theirs.

I think I cannot better conclude this publication than by presenting my readers with the following translation of a letter lately received by me from Circassia—one of the many corroborations of the intelligence of the recent successes of the Circassians:—

"My dear old friend, Yakûb Bey, how are you? As for ourselves, thank God, we are doing very well. The news we have for you is really interesting. On Wednesday the 16th of Zil-hitsheh, immediately after the morning prayer, the fortress on the stream of the Waïa was stormed in an hour. All the soldiers therein, together with the women, the guns, the ammunition, and stores—all were captured, and the houses were burned. We had in this affair but twenty martyrs, (*i. e.* killed.)

"Before this, the enemy marched from Sûkûm upon Ardler; but was unable to effect anything. Our friends having gathered, stopped them on their way, and took twenty-five prisoners.

"HASSAN BEY.

"27th of Zil-hitsheh, 1255, (1st March 1840.")

(1st P.S.) "My old Friend—After the taking of the above-named fort of Waïa, on Thursday the 8th of Moharrem, after morning prayer, we attacked the fort of Toapse. After seven and a-half hours' fighting, the place and all it contained fell into our hands. This much for your information.

(2d P.S.) "One week after the above date, the fort of Abûn in Shapsuk was taken. Thanks be to the Almighty!

"At this moment, my good friend, *we are gathering again.*

(3d P.S.) "Shekir Efendi, *Barzek* Hadji Dakhûm-okû, Hûssein Bey, and all our kinsmen, send you their salutations."

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATIONS.

No. I.

(Referred to in Vol. I. p. 126.)

LETTER BROUGHT BACK FROM THE RUSSIAN GENERAL, IN ANSWER TO A VERBAL COMMUNICATION SENT BY CIRCASSIAN HERALDS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDERS OF SEFIR BEY, AT THE INSTANCE, AS HE SAID, OF THE ENGLISH AMBASSADOR (LORD PONSONBY).

You have no chief from the Caspian to Anapa. You have been disobedient to the Sublime Porte, and have invaded the Russian territory and plundered it. If you wish for peace, you must restore all plunder, return deserters and prisoners, and admit a chief to be named by Russia. All the English who have come here are impostors, not to be believed on oath. They wish to gain the country; but it is better to be under Russian than English rule. If you give up intercourse with England, France, and other countries, and become good Russian subjects, peace may be obtained. What is it you expect? Do you not know that if the heavens should fall, Russia has power enough to support them on her bayonets? The other countries are good mechanics, artificers, &c.; but power rests with Russia alone. No country has ever made war successfully against Russia. She has of late procured the exile of your Ambassador from Constantinople; and if England be not able to protect one man, how can she sustain a country? Sefir Bey is in our hands. If England wished to interfere, it could be done through our Ambassador in England; but see

the imposition in their sending here only persons who come for their own interests! No nation is so strong as Russia; and if you wish peace, you must believe that there are but two powers—God in heaven, and the Emperor on earth! If you desire peace, you must restore all you have taken, and know no supreme authority but that of the Emperor, and be obedient to his will. All the prisoners, and deserters especially, must be surrendered to us, and when we place a chief over you, you must be entirely subservient to his orders. Henceforth when the Russians come here they must be well treated, and receive all they want; and travellers from Russia must have food and lodging given them, and be treated as chiefs of the country. Again, I say, deserters and prisoners must be surrendered; and if within these few days any have come into your hands, they also must be given up. We must be allowed to go where we please, erect forts where we think proper, and have all the artificers, labourers, and materials we may require. If you will not listen to and believe what is now said to you, you shall have your country taken from you, and be treated with the greatest severity; obey, therefore, what I tell you, and do as I direct. You must believe what is now said to you, and you will be treated with much lenity: otherwise, it is not my fault if your valleys be destroyed with fire and sword, and your mountains crushed like meal. If you surrender, you may retain your property; if not, all, even your arms, will be taken from you, and yourselves made slaves.

(Signed) General Aide-de-Camp ———

(Name illegible.)

May 28, 1837.

No. II.

ANSWER OF THE CIRCASSIANS TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

To the great Emperor Nicholas of Russia, and to our friend his faithful General and Servant.

All that you have at this time written we have well understood. You are a Russian general, and, thanks be to God, we are faithful Mussulmans. Our Prophet has told us never to be guilty of falsehood, and we obey his counsel. For ten years we have made war with you, and all the nations of Europe know that we are not friendly to each other. The greatest of all monarchs, the King of England, has commanded us to write at present; of all nations under heaven the greatest is England. She takes precedence of all, and she never tells lies. How dare you say that England is false?—for we know that when France attacked Egypt and the Memlûks, she was driven from it by England to gratify the Circassians; and from that time we have always been friendly to England. England never was guilty of falsehood; she has at all times been friendly to Mussulmans; she knows that our condition is not good, and for that reason we have hopes of her assistance. Even to the Caspian Sea we are now all united; we write in the name of all, and what we write is true. As we are all united, we can undertake that no one shall set foot in your territory; and as the Circassians will not molest you in your provinces, we expect that you will raze your fortresses, and retire to the other side of the Kûban, and a treaty may be made that you will no longer do us injury nor we you. Do not think that it is from fear that we now write to you, for we do so only in obedience to the orders of the Government of England, to which we are now subordinate. If you will not listen to what is now said, do as you please; but in that case send us no more letters, for we will not pay attention to them. Take good heed not to be led away by the belief

that we now write through fear of you, for be assured our only motive for doing so is the order of the English Government. By order of the King of England we wish to afford every facility to merchants coming to our coasts, and for this reason we desire that your forts may be withdrawn as soon as possible. You write too vauntingly when you say you will destroy this country; for, in so speaking, you arrogate to yourself the attributes of the Deity—the Creator! You speak with too much pride, and seem to think it to be in your power to do all that you will; but though we be but a small nation, with God's blessing, all the other nations will side with us.

If you will reply to our present propositions, send your reply to the Government of England, in whose hands we now are, and which is now our guarantee; but if not, write to us no more, but continue your war. Think not that we write to you through fear of your cannon and your powder, for we would not do so, but continue the war, but for the orders of England; and if men fail us, we will seek them even in the wombs of their mothers, and place arms in their hands!

May 29, 1837.

(Seals of Chief Judge and other seniors.)

To this letter General Williamineff sent a short one in reply, saying that he could not decide upon the matter it contained, but would refer it to Baron Rosen at Sûkûm-kaleh, and send his reply whenever he received it. The Circassians looked upon this as a *ruse* to gain time, and determined to act accordingly, not believing that Williamineff acted under Rosen's orders.

No. III.

(Referred to in Vol. I. page 254.)

LETTER FROM —— BEY* OF HATUKWOI.

To the illustrious English Envoys, many salutations, &c. &c.

Be it known to your Government, that the Government of Russia has sent us two ambassadors—the one a sultan, the other a noble—who have promised, on the part of the Russian Government, great riches, many presents, and the kindest treatment, in every respect that concerns our welfare, as the Russian Government seeks only to benefit our country. Such are the promises of its ambassadors; but neither our princes, our nobles, nor our other people, have believed their speeches, nor replied to them; for we hold them but as airy words.

We are aware that the humanity of your Excellencies' hearts induced you to visit this country and partake in its sufferings. We know the goodness and the friendship for us of your King, your Emperor, whom day and night we pray for, and may God long preserve! How, then, should we abandon the friendship of such a monarch, and lose the benefit of the exertion he makes for us, by throwing ourselves into the arms of Russia? We are deeply grateful for what your Government has already done for us, and wish not to lose the benefit of it. Our law ordains that we shall pray five times a-day, and these prayers we direct to England: it is our duty and our intention always to pray for, and to obey you. To the end of time we can never forget the goodness your Government has shown towards us. We will proceed straight forward, in accordance with all it may order, and will never be unmindful of its kindness. At present we have but one soul, one body, and one face—

* The name of this chief is omitted, lest he might be brought into trouble hereafter.

all directed toward England. Our good-will toward England is as undeniable as the brilliancy of the sun or the light of the full moon, and it may be implicitly confided in*.

If you be as sincere toward us as we are toward you, you will write us an account of the news you bring, which have been but vaguely reported to us; and if this be done before the Emperor comes, we shall thus be prevented from falling into his power. Here the population is numerous; and as there are some men of sagacity among us, so there are many ignorant who may be led astray by deceitful speeches. Now is the time to prevent the establishment of Russian power here. We have confidence in your word, and every hope that affairs will terminate favourably. In this hope we have hitherto rested, and it has occasioned our sending you this address. We hope in God that, after receiving this letter, you will write to England and come here to visit us; and, as time is precious, we trust you will write us and come here immediately, that this country may not be irretrievably lost. Our last prayer is, that you will use despatch, and that you will give all the encouragement you can.

1253. (Received about 30th August 1837.)

(Signed) • —— ——.

P.S.—Pray answer this address immediately.

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* The strong feelings of gratitude thus expressed, we may presume to have been occasioned by the reported intermediacy of the English ambassador.

No. IV.

(Referred to in Vol. II. page 19.)

DOCUMENT RECEIVED BY THE CIRCASSIANS FROM THE RUSSIAN CAMP AT SASHE.

To the Inhabitants of the interior of Circassia and its environs, this Proclamation;

On account of the continual vexations and violences caused by the enemy in the provinces of Asia towards the East, the inhabitants of the Caucasus having demanded of the Emperor of Russia to grant them succour and protection, the Emperor has acceded to their prayer, and has formed a treaty with your mountaineers, in the same manner as other powers treat with their own subjects. And, according to the treaty of Adrianople, made lately between the Russian Government and the Ottoman Empire, you should be under the protection and orders of Russia, since this condition was accepted and confirmed by the Ottoman Court.

Neither on the part of the Ottoman Court, nor, of any other state, is there any right whatever to take concern in your arrangements or affairs; and the individuals who have come among you, promising you assistance, in order that you should offer resistance to the Court of Russia—which is your legitimate and original Government—are false-hearted liars! This is well known. They tell you falsehoods, in saying they are sent as ambassadors on the part of England, of the Ottoman Court, and the Pasha of Egypt. Besides this, it is evident that, your people being ignorant, these individuals, for their own gain, excite you and lead you into error; and the truth of this is proved, inasmuch as the promises of the said individuals to afford you succour, either in ships of war or in troops, have in no way been fulfilled; and the arms and munitions of war which these liars above mentioned have brought you, in saying they were agents

of the above-mentioned powers, were not sent by these powers, and are in no way worthy of them. Be assured that these persons are liars—merchants without credit—and that the things they have brought they seek to trade with, and make money by; and to impose upon, and sell dear to, the honest inhabitants of the Caucasus, the bad merchandise which they have brought as good. This is notorious; and thus these individuals—as intriguing as you are courageous—put you in doubt, and make you declare war against your true Emperor; thus your brave and warlike people, and a portion of your possessions, are destroyed; and, finally, it is more than evident that you will thus be ruined. Is it possible that an Emperor so magnanimous as that of Russia, can permit the disobedience of a portion only of his people?

Moreover, whoever of your mountaineers are disobedient, and make resistance by war, will be deprived by the Great Emperor of Russia for ever of all the favourable treatment which he accords to his faithful subjects; and, without doubt, they will experience great misery; because those individuals who are not submissive to their true sovereign, cannot, as sons, be introduced into the paternal court of their Emperor of Russia; but punishment, and the Imperial displeasure, will be drawn down upon them; whereas, if you be voluntarily obedient to our magnanimous Emperor of Russia, you will obtain from him exalted favours innumerable, since you will merit the great clemency and indulgence which he grants to his other subjects, and thus your intestine wars will be prevented, and the necessary tranquillity will be established; you will all be in security; the commerce of Russia will circulate among you uninterruptedly; and the articles which you do not possess will be supplied by her: and, towards those who show themselves desirous of serving our Emperor, favour will in like manner be shown, and they will acquire honours and distinctions which will remain with them; and, according to your

usages, power and government will be granted to you, while, on the part of the Russian Government, no constraint will be exercised against any one in regard to either your religion or your laws. The Mussulman provinces subject to the Court of Russia will experience from day to day an increase in their blessings and honours, and the favours and benefits of our lord the Emperor towards you will be endless. This is evident; and of those among your countrymen who shall serve the Russian Government with constancy and fidelity, many shall become rich, and will, moreover, acquire honour and celebrity, as is well known.

According to the orders of the Emperor of Russia, the necessary troops will be sent into this country, and they will persevere in their endeavours to take possession of the coast of the Black Sea; and, in discharge of the duty of commanding these troops, it is enjoined me, in regard to intriguing individuals—Circassian subjects—who, engaged in revolts and plots, are insubordinate, that their territory shall, leisurely and by arbitration, be taken possession of by these troops, after their having been once more invited to peace.

The Imperial order has thus been published; and, believe me, that its sublime counsels are for your advantage: and, if you receive in time the high favours of your legitimate Sovereign, I shall come as your sincere friend to put myself in conference with you, without endangering either your persons or your property: at the same time we shall begin trade; and, whatever you bring, we will buy at the prices which you shall fix; and, in fine, the proprietors of the lands of the fortresses, which must be reserved, shall be paid more money than their value.

Our greatly august Emperor requires of you the following conditions:—

Art. 1*st.* You must discontinue your hostility and all your irregular proceedings.

Art. 2*nd.* The hostages which you shall give, shall, after

four months, be changed, and your Chief Judge shall furnish us with others.

Art. 3rd. You must sell us all prisoners and deserters.

Art. 4th. You shall not, without the order of your Chief Judge, give refuge in your villages to such individuals as may be thieves, or otherwise bad subjects, nor to those who will not submit to us.

Art. 5th. The horses, herds, and flocks, of those who will not submit to us, should not be mingled with those of those who are submissive; for, in case those who are not obedient mingle their animals with those who are, our troops will take possession of all these animals; and those who act contrary to this order shall be punished according to their faults.

Art. 6th. Those who shall permit pillagers or other miscreants to pass through their lands on to our frontiers, shall be compelled to restore to us all our men and animals captured.

Art. 7th. You must be submissive to the judge who shall be appointed by our Court of Russia.

Art. 8th. Every year you must renew your "papers of submission," furnished by your Russian judge; and he who does not do so shall cease to be under the protection of our troops.

Oh, inhabitants of Circassia! in again reminding you of the munificence and exhaustless mercy of our legitimate Emperor, and in recommending to your acceptance the conditions he requires of you, I would have you know, that it is not for the purpose of the more easily mastering you that such conditions are demanded.

I expect an answer to this proclamation, which has been written on the field of battle, near the village of Sutch (Sûtsha).

1254, 1st day of the moon Sefer (May 1838).

No. V.

(Referred to in Vol. II. page 20.)

THE ANSWER OF THE CIRCASSIANS TO THE FOREGOING RUSSIAN DOCUMENT, SENT TO THE CAMP AT SASHE, ON THE 6TH MAY, 1838.

THE letter which you have sent us has been received, and its contents we have understood; and an answer to it would not have been necessary, but that through intrigue you criticise the English who are here, whom yet we ourselves know sufficiently well to judge whether or not they be trustworthy.

True it is that the merchants of the King of England are numerous; but all affairs are negotiated by merchants; and the country which does not possess merchants is not much worth. The merchandise of England is greatly better than yours; and in like manner these individuals are much more acceptable than you.

You say definitively that this country has been given to you: which is not true. We have long ceased to be the sport of your deceitful words and treacherous actions; and finally, we shall remain free. God knows that for ten years you have persecuted us with your falsehoods to destroy confidence, and sow dissension among us; but we are not so ignorant as you would have us, and thus we remain united. If this people were rayas of the Ottoman Court, how came you to send here the ships and people of your sovereign to trade illegally, in the supposition that the Ottoman Emperor did not concern himself much about this country?

We well know the intrigues you used long since in tempting and exciting the infidel Greeks and other governments, for the sole purpose of rendering weak the Ottoman government. Because, afterwards, when you found that that government was making improvements in the organization of its Mussulman troops, you excited the lying and

intriguing Greeks to declare war, and destroy its force: and, when the Ottoman government wished to punish its rayas, you offered to assist it; but it replied to you, "I can of myself punish my subjects;" upon receiving which answer, you recommenced your deceits, and caused the destruction of such an amount of Mussulman troops and shipping at Navarino. And when its forces were thus diminished, you then began to complain verbally: "You have deceived me, and therefore I must declare war." And wishing to declare war, you demanded permission of the other sovereigns; promising to restore whatever territory you might take. With this assurance they were content, and gave their assent. But at length, instead of making peace, you reverted to your former ways of deceiving viziers and ministers; and having by stealth drawn up a statement that the country from the liman of Kizil-tash to Sûkûm had been assigned to you; and, without permitting the ministers to read this statement, under the dread of the sanguinary sword, you forced them to sign it. Moreover, you deceived the other powers in saying, "The rayas of the Osmanlis are now given to me." But this your last deceit has become known by the government of England, which has refused to ratify it.

We know the character of the King of England—that *he* does not pass from his word. Your document which he has rejected, we in like manner reject; and he did so, because he is the friend of the Emperor of the Ottomans. Was it not England that drove the French from Egypt?

The Pasha of Egypt has made prayer to the King of England, saying, "Give me also a sovereignty." And the King answered him, "Come and serve your Emperor, as in the time past; otherwise I shall become your enemy."

When of late your fleet came to the Sublime City, you begged the Ottoman Court to associate you with it in the guardianship of the "gate" of the Black Sea—"that the ships even of friendly states may not pass without our permis-

sion." Which intrigue you compassed, in order that it might not be perceived that you were carrying on war with the Circassians. But your intrigue has been seen through.

For fifty years you have aimed at possessing yourself entirely of the Sublime City and of the Black Sea; but you shrink from your project since you find that its ships are ready to oppose you. England now knows that the provinces of Circassia are rugged and inaccessible and their inhabitants martial; and she befriends us, not from self-interest, but because the Ottoman Court, whose sincere friend she is, is at present not strong.

Formerly, when your Emperor Alexander wrote to Bonaparte, he said, "Let us unite, and take possession of the Sublime capital and of the Black Sea; the Ottoman capital and the Black Sea shall be mine, for they are the *blossom* (rose) of my country; and all beyond (the Dardanelles) shall be yours." But Bonaparte refused; and he wrote to the Court of England, saying, "Let us unite, and if he molests the Ottoman government, let us declare war against him." And thus these two Powers combined.

When Yassi and Bukorest on the Danube were given you, you said, "Have not the Isles also been given us? Let us there form a quarantine, and a custom-house; and thus we shall have in our control the ships of commerce." But the Emperor of Austria said, "This concerns me." With him combined the Kings of France and England; and these three Powers being now in unity with the Ottoman Court, it has thus acquired force. Thanks be to God that the Ottoman Court has now so well provided itself in the munitions of war and the mustering of troops and artillery, and has so fortified her territories with new and solid fortresses, that if you again begin to lift the head she will know how to answer you.

It is not in fear that we write; for the burthen of this our reply is, that we will never submit to you.

You say, "The Mussulmans who are under my protection are happy:" but we know and see that the Mussulmans who are in your power are in suffering and indigence. We see also that you carry off our countrymen, and seek to subdue us by force; but, if you have true strength, how comes it that, while thus capturing our brethren and struggling with us, you yet do not succeed in subduing us?

God be thanked, we are well aware of what would be the fate of us and of our children if you should master us! God grant that we may never fall into your hands! for on your brethren in religion you inflict infinite suffering and anguish. We well know you are tyrants; and all the misery inflicted by you on the Kazans, and other Tatars who escape from your forts, recount to us their sufferings, and seek and find among us a peaceful refuge.

All that we have to ask of you is, that you will evacuate the forts on the Circassian territory. We will then remain within our frontiers: none among us shall make war on you, and we will be as good neighbours.

These are our only terms; for we have no confidence either in your benefactions or your promises. In your letter you speak sufficiently plausibly, and of the security we should enjoy from you; but we know your sole intent to be, the getting us within your power; which neither you nor any other can accomplish.

Perchance you are become proud, because of the spots of earth which your slaves have gained for you, and which a mat might cover!

The month Sefer, 1254. (Seals of Hadji Dakûm-okû and other seniors.)

No. VI.

(Referred to in Vol. II. pp. 79 and 104.)

LETTER FROM SEFIR BEY TO HIS COUNTRYMEN.

To the chiefs, and the representatives of the tribes of Circassia, to the highly respected inhabitants of Notwhatsh, Shapsuk, and Abazak; to the virtuous, the learned, and the warlike, the nobles, the elders, the chiefs of provinces, and those who are zealous for the Mussulman religion; salutation, prosperity, and health, be to all of you.

May you all be informed that, according to the agreement and articles entered into between us, all information concerning the posture of the affairs of the tribes has been communicated to the Sublime Porte, and to all the other powers. This information was communicated verbally, without the omission of anything, and the answers thereto, given according to the circumstances, have been already made known to you.

In the course of this holy year, the English Agha, together with the noble individual Ibrahim, have traversed the whole provinces of Circassia, and being arrived here, have given us full accounts of all that has occurred in the country. As we did not however feel satisfied as to what confidence should be placed in their accounts, they set out again from Adrianople to the Sublime Porte: and in conformity with the conference which had taken place with the grandees of the court; with the minutes which have again been sent us: with the conversation which has occurred, and the minutes which have been given us by the said Agha, the whole having been translated, the accompanying draught has been made out and sent to you by the hands of Kûstan-oghlû Ibrahim. This translation you will communicate to all the representatives of the tribes, all the ulemas, the nobles, the elders, the chiefs of provinces, and all the Mussulmans of your tribes; to those who are zealous in their efforts for the Mussulman religion, in fine to all. You will give due consideration to the contents of the communication, and if

it be found satisfactory, you will have a fair copy thereof made, and all the representatives of tribes, all the ulemas, the nobles, the elders, the chiefs of provinces, will attach their signatures to it, and then you will send it to us.

You will conduct the person whom we now send before the judges, and having made him take oath upon the Sacred Volume, and having put to him such well-considered interrogations as you deem necessary upon all these subjects, without reference to times past, you will after due consideration act in this affair as may be considered advisable, so that at the day of judgment you may have nothing to reproach against me. But if you reply that we will continue to act as in times past, the responsibility will lie with you. If however your answer be in conformity with those suggestions, you will then permit the English Agha who is with you, to visit the whole country from Sûkûm to Anapa, and from Anapa to Karatshai, and the districts of Kaza-Baktsha and Bakraha; and when he has spoken with all the people of these districts, you will cause to be attached to the document the signatures of all their chiefs, ulemas, nobles, elders, chiefs of provinces, in short of all, and you will send the document to us by the above-mentioned person.

But if this document do not meet your approbation, you will send us distinct information by the person, because always when we put questions to you, your answer has not been to the point in question, having replied, "Very well, but what we want you to send us are cannons, ammunition, troops, treasure, and officers;" whereas, in order that these may be sent you, you must make arrangements that your answer be sent us within the course of a month, intimating to us whether these propositions meet your approbation or not.

Merchants, and other individuals from England, and every other country, except Russia, you will permit to visit the country, and even to go wherever they like, without giving them the least molestation; but with those who have not a certificate, you will not hold any communication upon

the affairs of the country, although you may permit them to travel in it.

There are, however, some Circassians who do mischief here by their injudicious conduct, these individuals you should on no account permit to leave the coast until the affair now in agitation be arranged.

Remain firm to the engagements you may come under, otherwise all our painful and long labours for the maintenance of the Faith will be lost.

Beginning of the moon Sefer, 1254.

INDORSATION BY JUDGE MEHMET ON THE ABOVE.

To the servant of the reigning Sovereign, the illustrious potentate of England, my friend Yakbûb Bey. Although, my friend, you have had a misunderstanding with Kehri-oghlû Shamuz Agha, yet all the Mussulmans have not given you offence; come therefore to Notwhatsh to see your friends; but do as seems suitable to your respectable pleasure.

The month Moharrem, 1254.

No. VII.

(Referred to in Vol. II. p. 104.)

ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

To the reigning Sovereign, the highly venerated Potentate, the Possessor of the provinces and the crown, and the magnificent Monarch of England (of the imperial brilliant threshold), this humble representation of her servants the Circassians.

We have long suffered from the outrages of the Russians; yet the falsehoods they promulgate against us are more injurious, inasmuch as they assert that, from the one sea to the other, all the territory of the provinces of Circassia has been bestowed on them by the Sublime Porte; that hostages have been given them, and that it is entirely in their power; that the tribes of Circassia are under their domination—slaves subjected to their supreme orders; that from one sea to the other they have long since conquered the country by surrounding it with fortresses. Thus they seek to exalt

themselves in the eyes of the other powers, while it is as apparent as the mid-day sun that all their statements are false. Thus they have long continued to harass us, in the hope of at length acquiring the absolute mastery.

The truth is, that formerly Persian merchants came and went, and made sales and purchases *; but since the Russians intruded themselves this commerce is cut off.

In reply to the allegations of the Russians, your humble servants, the Circassians, solemnly protest, that never since its commencement did the Ottoman power conquer us with the sword; never did it bring us succour in our distresses; and never at any time did we pay it tribute: on the contrary it took our children and sold them as slaves in its bazars. And such having been the case, how could the Sublime Porte bestow us upon the Russians? If it had friendship for them, it might have given them some of the countries under its sway, but it had not either the power or the right to give them ours.

As for the forts which the Russians have constructed, they do us neither good nor harm. We are disposed to be in amity with our neighbours, but never shall we in any way be subject to the Russians. We hope in God that we shall never be subjugated by them, and through the aid of the Almighty this hope may be fulfilled, for the Lord is a just God, and He will grant us his aid, that to the last among our tribes we may sustain the war against the Russians, and through His almighty succour never submit to them.

Although the governor of Anapa failed in performing his duty, he was a servant of the sacred and illustrious Chief of the Mussulman faith, and with the help of God we trust,

* While at a hamlet on the Pseküps in Abazak belonging to a very wealthy noble called Borrokh, I was told that of the *five* guest-houses his father always kept open for the entertainment of strangers from different quarters—Tshetshens, Kûmûks, Lesghis, &c. (each people being entertained separately)—one was appropriated for Georgians.

that our connexion with that sacred and illustrious religion may remain unimpaired. If therefore the Ottoman government will now accept of our adhesion, we will henceforth submit ourselves voluntarily to it and to its orders, on these conditions: 1mo. That it shall entirely desist from taking and selling us as slaves.* 2d. That it shall furnish us with cannons, soldiers, ammunition, and the other appurtenances of war, sending us also treasure, and assisting and succouring us faithfully; then we will be obedient to it. Let it send us also officers that we may begin the war with the Russians in earnest; and then, with the aid of the Almighty, we pledge our lives and our souls, that we shall take vengeance on the enemy. We engage moreover on the part of our tribes, that when the war is finished we will repay the Ottoman government the whole of the expense it shall have incurred: it shall be reimbursed for everything. And these matters having been thus arranged with the foremen-tioned government, we will remain submissive to its orders, and under its entire direction.

But if the Ottoman government will not aid us and furnish us with cannons, ammunition, troops, appurtenances of war and treasure; and if it shall not cease as in time past to take us for slaves, then we shall not subject ourselves to it, nor recognise its sovereign as ours; but if it furnish us with cannons, ammunition, troops, appurtenances of war and treasure, and aid and protect us, then shall we be submissive to its imperial orders, and will begin in earnest to take vengeance on the Russians in war, and at the termination of the war, we bind and oblige ourselves to repay all the expense which the Ottoman government may have

* It must be here explained that the crime thus sought to be exterminated is so deeply rooted in the interest and usage of both the Turks and the Circassians, that the elders of the latter—however desirous of removing this heretical weed, and however powerful in other respects—were conscious that it was only through the special aid of the Padisha—the supreme authority in judicial and religious affairs—that they could hope to eradicate it.

incurred, and never to submit to the Russians; for in fine, if the war should render us feeble, we will disperse ourselves upon the mountains sooner than surrender to them.

If, however, your Majesty should not deem these arrangements advisable, we trust that your Majesty, and the other Powers, will issue orders that we may continue free and independent like Persia, Affghanistan, and other mountain-countries; and when your majesty has thus definitively ordered and arranged, we will consider how we shall next proceed. If, however, the above arrangements could be made with the Ottoman government, we should esteem it a special favour, and we should be perfectly satisfied.

Sefir Bey, our minister, has been ordered to present our humble petition to your Majesty, and to the Ottoman Emperor, and we will act in conformity with what may be done and spoken by him.

May your Majesty, whose person is endowed with every exalted quality—with intelligence and with compassion—deign to receive this the humble address of our tribes. On your Majesty's supreme will our destiny depends.

1254.

(N. B.—To this address were appended the signatures of about *twelve hundred and fifty* of the most influential chiefs and elders throughout all the provinces of Circassia.)

No. VIII.

(Referred to in Vol. II. p. 252.)

LETTER OF THE RUSSIAN GENERAL TO THE PEOPLE OF NOTWHATSH.

To all the 'Aghas, the Uzdens, and the men of courage, in Natukwatsh,

Salutation!

The sublime Emperor (Azim Padisha*) having made me commander of a portion of his innumerable soldiers, I have taken the rivers of Toapsha (Toapse), Shapsokhan

* This is the term used by the Mussulmans in regard to the Sultan, and may be translated "our holy Emperor."

(Shapsekwa), and Semez. The Great Emperor has ordered some constructions to be effected on the water of Semez for the shelter of his vessels. For this purpose it is necessary to open up roads defended by forts; one road proceeding to Anapa, and another leading by the plain opposite the fort of Abin to the échelle of Iptshadûg (Psadûg). The people of Natukwatsh, established between the sea and the road to Anapa, must, like the Kabardans, either make peace with us or quit the country they inhabit.

The fortunate, the merciful, the Great Emperor, has ordered that friendly advances for peace should always be made you before having recourse to the force of arms. If the people of Natukwatsh accept my propositions for peace, let them send me some of their most intelligent and virtuous aghas, and I will explain to them the sublime orders of the great Emperor. But if they desire war and combats, let them assemble what force they have and resist us, and they shall then see the nullity of their efforts.

Some sons of brigands who have fled their country have, for four years, made the people of Natukwatsh believe that the Sultan and the Kings of England and of the French would speedily send you succour. But the great Emperor is at peace with these states; and even if he were at war with them, how comes it that the people of Natukwatsh forget that, when the great Emperor conquered Anapa, Erzerûm, and Akhalzik, the Sultan could not defend them; and if the kings of England and of the French did not then succour the Sultan, how can they succour the people of Natukwatsh? Assuredly they will not succour them.

False prophets made the Jews believe that there should come a champion who would destroy all the Mussulmans and Christians. Two thousand years have elapsed, and the champion has not appeared; yet the Jews expect his arrival. The cowardly Jews believed in false prophets: should the brave people of Natukwatsh confide in vile traitors?

If any persons should tell you that the great Emperor

may change his orders, assuredly they would speak falsely; and if my dragomans should tell you that such may be the case, they would also speak falsely; for they have no other duty than that of translating to you my very words, and you must not believe in any of them, for their words are false; in like manner as I have not believed those who, having come secretly into our camp, have said, "I will make them incline to peace."

I am the chief of all these troops; it is I who order all operations. If, by means of the intelligent and virtuous among you, you will send me an ambassador, there will be no need for any other person. If, desirous of peace, you come in a friendly manner, I will receive you favourably; but if you deem war necessary, although I am averse from it, you shall at last repent, and on you will lie the blame; for the termination of the war shall be very fearful for you: whereas, with peace, our friendship shall last till the end of the world, as war shall cause daily renewed hostilities.

جنرال ليطنانط رفسكى

[Yours, Lieutenant General Rayevski.]

(Not dated, but received in the beginning of October 1838.)

WAR-CITATION ENDORSED UPON THE ENVELOPE OF THE ABOVE LETTER WHEN SENT TO SHAPSUK.

To our virtuous, noble, much-esteemed brother, his reverence Hadji Osman Efendi.

We salute you. Having inspected the letter of the infidel Moscovs, and the inadmissible propositions it contains, read them to the elders of Shapsogh, and proclaim them to your people. Thereafter, among the elders of Shapsogh, Khodil-oghlû Hamirz, Shabladik-oghlû Nûssi, Lûz-oghlû Ketakhadj, Nassû, Hatovidj, Selavik Mohammed, and all the others, after salutations, will assemble as many people as possible: and you also will come to this quarter. If you do not come, all your labour and your efforts throughout so many years will be entirely lost. And you, all our brothers, inhabitants of the province, animated by the courage of the faith, come with all haste. Oh! through the love of God, by respect for the Prophet, by piety, arm yourselves with courage, and hasten. Prayers and salutations attend you!

The 15th of Shaban the holy, 1254.

BASTI-KU PSHEMAFF.
KEBRI-KU SHAMUZ.
HADJI-KU MEHMET.

No. IX.

(Referred to in Vol. II. p. 252.)

ANSWER OF THE CIRCASSIANS TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

To the Lieutenant-General the noble Lord Rayevski, in the service of the Shah of the Russian Government, the Emperor Nicholas.

FOR twelve years you have told falsehoods in saying that Circassia had been given to you, and have published such falsehoods in saying that from one sea to the other all the

Circassian provinces have been given me by the Ottoman Government, and hostages have been rendered to me in order that I may command in them. And such falsehoods you do not cease to publish in saying that the Circassians are in subjection to me and have become my tributaries; I have encompassed their country with forts and blockaded it in both seas, seeking thus to exalt yourself among the other powers. But that all this is false is as evident as the sun, because the Ottoman Government never acquired our country by the sword; never purchased it with its treasure; for twelve years it has never aided us in any way; never at any time did it demand, and as little did we ever pay it, any duties. How then could the Ottoman Government cede us to the Russians? If through friendship for them it wished to bestow countries, it might do so with the pen, and through simulated authority; but in reality it had neither authority nor right to make such a cession of us.

My Lord Lieutenant-General Rayevski, all the forts which you have constructed are but as our ancient cemeteries, neither of advantage nor prejudice to us. Frogs, lizards, mice, and serpents, seek refuge in our fields; you and they alike do us neither good nor injury, and your friendship we value but as theirs. Never at any time have we been subject to you Russians, and may God, who has hitherto averted from us such a disaster, still protect us from it. The Almighty is a just God; He will grant us his great succour, and to the last man among our tribes we will always be at enmity and war with you Russians.

In the letter which you have written to our tribes, you speak of the English nobles as false Jews, and say that for four years these English nobles have deceived us with hopes of aid from the king of England. If you will come out from the fort you are constructing but half an hour, you shall then know what the Circassians and the English are.

But, my friend Lieutenant-General Rayevski, there is no doubt that the Russians were for a long time known but as

fishermen, and it is notorious that they have not long been in power; and if their General were a brave man, he would not have spoken in such rude and unworthy terms of two English guests. And if it be because you possess many cannons and much ammunition that you thus speak, know that it is written in the Great Book of Writings that God is supreme; that power and grandeur as well as poverty and obscurity are distributed according to His will; and therefore both conditions have their blessings. Thus it has been appointed by God, the almighty, the forgiving, the merciful God; and as He is a just sovereign He will grant us his aid, that until the last among our Circassian tribes we may resist and make war on the Russians, and never be subject to them.

When the Sultan allowed you to occupy the dominions of Shahan Gherai of the Crimea, we have seen in your conduct there what are your friendship and your hostility. All that is known to the august and magnanimous Emperor of the Ottomans. The Russians are ever merciless and insatiable, and there never was any one who made friendship with them that did not at length repent having done so. All the Ottoman people distrust their neighbours the Russians, whose friendship, even towards those of their own country, is not to be depended upon.

If you wish for our friendship withdraw all your miserable troops who are on our frontier, from Anapa to Karatshaï; let all your forts be dismantled, and their garrisons transported across the Kûban; and then if you wish to make peace with our tribes, we may take it into consideration; because what we see with our own eyes we may confide in.

Akhmet Gherai the brother of the sultans of the Crimea being dead, his illustrious sons were guests of the Russians; and you have made them serve as soldiers for their subsistence. Who, after seeing all that, would make friendship with you? To the last man among our tribes who survives we shall ever make war with you; and may the Almighty

and just God grant us His aid and succour, that those who are faithful Mussulmans may never make friendship with Russia.

This is all we have to say.

The 21st of the moon Moharrem, 1254.

(*Seals of Chief Judge and other seniors.*)

N.B.—The copy of the letter of the Circassians to Sefir Bey (referred to in the same page as the above) appears to have been lost.

No. X.

(Referred to in Vol. II. p. 275.)

ADDRESS OF THE CIRCASSIANS TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF ENGLAND AND OF TURKEY, FORWARDED BY THEIR ENVOY, AZ-DEMIR, ON THE 10TH MARCH 1839.

To the Crowned Majesty of England, supreme, powerful, and honourable: The supplication of Circassia.

THE purport of the present humble address of your servants the Circassians, is to show that for twelve years they have not ceased to make war with the Russians. Each year the armies of the base Russians pour down in force upon your servants the Circassians, and new regiments are constantly organised to continue the war against them, yet daily they resist with the sword and prevent their progress; although our families, our children escaping from our dwellings to the mountains and forests during winter, and sheltering themselves in huts, there perish from the severity of the cold. But it is the will of the Most High that we should suffer thus for our religion.

To the government of the true religion, (may it be eternal!) to the magnanimous, the most merciful, the most beneficent, and most puissant Padisha, refuge of the world, our lord, the sole judge and chief of the religion, and vicar of the prophet, may it be known that your servants will not succumb to the sword; they cannot but be free, and num-

bered among the truly faithful who rejoice in your presence, and are willing to be numbered among those who have bound themselves to be submissive and obedient as in times past, to the most magnanimous Padisha, refuge of the world, as is well known to our illustrious representative. Henceforth the nation and tribes of Circassia, even to the last individual among them, will never make friendship with Russia while our magnanimous Padisha shall remain on the earth, and our illustrious above-mentioned personage survive; for the great God is a just monarch, and He will grant succour to those who, like us, cease not to address to Him our vows and prayers for the most puissant Emperor, refuge of the world; beseeching the Almighty in our five prayers that his kingdom may be everlasting.

Winter or summer we cease not our combats with the Russians, as is well known; and this sacred year great forces of the base Russians with their lieutenant-general Rayevski have invaded us by land and sea, and the false infidels have poured down upon your devoted Circassians from the commencement of Shaban to the end of Ramazan the holy, and in fighting they have constructed a fortress in the fashion of a palûnka [a fortification of earth with a fosse] on the shore of the territory of Sûdjûk, and then, burning all that they found, fought their way back, and passed to the other side of the Kûban. Your devoted Circassians have not given them any answer about peace, and if any one in secret should break his oath in his communications with them, he would be fined a thousand piastres, and if again he be found among those who should be disposed to yield themselves up to the Russians, he would be put to death; because it has been thus determined on according to fixed regulations.

The Englishman who is here, the greatly honoured, the ever constant, the nobly descended lord Misr. Bell, having assembled the elders thus addressed them; "May it please you, for some years that I have now sojourned throughout your country, I have seen how you Circassians prosecute

the war; I have known their true position, and have been witness to their sufferings; I shall go to the sublime city, and if it meet your approbation, I shall carry thither your signeted address. You know that I came here for the support of the faithful Mussulmans, and I well know how the infidel Russians come here to burn and destroy the goods and possessions of the poor devoted Circassians, and to slay their bravest; and that after having merely crossed the Kûban, and caused some suffering along its banks, they falsely assert that they have taken Circassia by force, and publish such deceits, and many others, to gain themselves honour among the other powers. I shall doubtless have an opportunity of seeing the very illustrious, beneficent, compassionate, supremely-good, above-mentioned dignitary Sefir Bey the noble, and shall inform him of what I have with my own eyes seen in regard to the condition of his humble servants, and shall also thereon make true report to the greatly honoured, crowned majesty, my sovereign the monarch of England."

The above-mentioned noble Agha has been useful to us through his advice and friendship. The departure of this distinguished person has not been agreed to, and we consider it advisable that it should not take place.

According to the requisition of the above-mentioed noble, in conjunction with Kûstan-oghlû Ibrahim Agha, and with our approval, this address has been drawn up.

1254, 4th of the month of Zilkada.

(Here were affixed the seals of the chief Judge and of sixty other chiefs and elders.)

No. XI.

(Referred to in Vol. II. pp. 286 and 288.)

DECLARATION OF THE CHIEF JUDGE OF CIRCASSIA AND OTHER SENIORS REGARDING SUJUK-KALEH.

In regard to the harbour which is in this place called Sûjûk, it is narrated that at the intercession and prayer of refugee members of the ancient Sultan family, of honourable and illustrious chiefs, and of distinguished and chosen individuals, the Ottoman government built there a castle. But since the year 1197, there has not existed in the harbour called Sûjûk, either on the part of Russia or on the part of the Ottoman government, any fortress whatever.

In the past year, the Lieutenant-General Rayevski arrived in stealth, by sea and by land, and constructed a fort of palisades. He placed within the said palisades certain pioneers as a garrison, who are there besieged and incapable of advancing ten minutes beyond the palisades, to procure from without the things necessary. This God knows to be true. Formerly, during the war and hostilities which occurred with the Osmanli government, the General Doki of Russia [*Général le Duc de Richelieu*] came in ships and made a small fort. He remained but a month or two, and not having been able to defend himself left his position and departed. Previous to the above-mentioned year, and to the affair of the Crimea, the Ottoman government constructed the castle with stone walls, and there, for some years, remained a portion of the Tatar people; and for the purpose of preventing the losses occasioned by Circassian thieves and cheats outside of the castle to the people within, belonging to the noble and aged servant of Gherai of the Crimea the Renowned, there was placed in the said castle a Bey or Prince. But before the death of the said Prince of Gherai, he left the said castle of Sûjûk and retired into his own country which is in Circassia. And the people

of the castle after leaving their abode dispersed themselves and each went his way; and the castle remained deserted and fell into ruin of itself, not having been in any way intentionally ruined. And, excepting the fortress of Anapa, no castle of the Ottoman court in these countries has been taken in war: and for fifty-eight years there have not been in the harbour of Sûjûk any but Circassians, as on all the rest of the Circassian coast. That none but Circassians have dwelt there we attest in this life as we shall do in that of eternity: and for this purpose the present has been written.

Russia says that the Ottoman government accepted of us as subjects, and "they are now my slaves, my government is unique;" but we reply to these Russian pretences that the Ottoman government is the sole legislator and chief of the Mussulman law, and that it having been pleased to honour us as faithful Mussulmans, we took oath to be in amity with its friends, and at enmity with its enemies; but it never received from our hands any sort of contribution; consequently, how could the Ottoman government give us to Russia? To give us thus away was not within the power of the Padisha. And in like manner, how could he interfere regarding the castle of Sûjûk? If it be answered, "by known right," we in like manner reply it was not within the power of the Padisha.

(Signed by) HAFUN-OGHLU ISLAM.
MASKA-OGHLU MAGHOL.
SEVA-OGHLU HASSAN.
HAUD-OGHLU MANSUR.
HUNA MUKIRAI SAMHOR.
TCHERKEZ KARISSI HADJI DAUD
MUHAMMED EMIN ABD-ULNUR
EFENDI.

The 24th of the moon Moharrem—year 1255.

P.S.—The castle of Sûjûk, which became dismantled and ruined of itself, was made a present of to the Circassians:

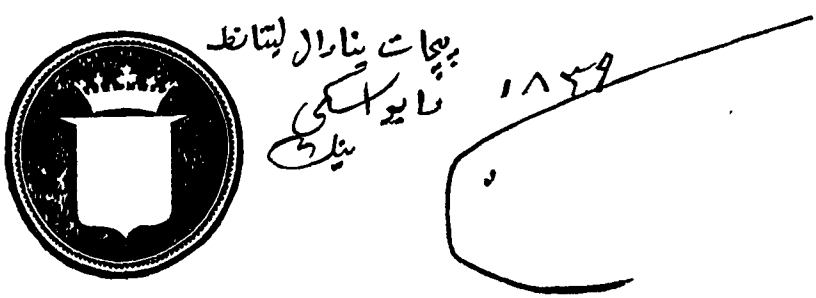
the people who were in it dispersed, went here and there, and all died; and the Circassians endeavouring to remove the powder there, it caught fire, and thus the entire ruin of the said fortress was caused.

No. XII.

(Referred to in Vol. II. p. 347.)

NOTIFICATION RECEIVED IN CONGRESS AT GHESH, 7TH JULY, 1839.

Barzek Hadji having caused intrigues among the people, and having given false intelligence, that the Sultan and the King of England are coming to aid the Circassians; on my part I make known to all the people, that whoever cuts off his head and brings it to me, shall receive a thousand "*monets*" in silver; and he who cuts off the head of the Barzek Hadji, let him come directly into any one of our forts, and there shall be given the order that, after being refreshed and within the hour, there shall be counted to him the thousand roubles of silver, into his own hands.



["Petshat *" of Lieut. General Rayevski. 1839.]

* Russian for seal.

ABSTRACT OF TREATIES BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY, RELATING TO CIRCASSIA.

No. XIII.

(Referred to in Vol. II. pp. 285 and 286.)

THE Circassians in the struggle which they have sustained with Russia during so many years, and so heroically —one had almost said miraculously, considering the comparative resources of the contending parties—are either rebels fighting against their lawful sovereign, or a free and independent people, engaged in an honourable warfare with a foreign invader, and as such, entitled to the approbation and sympathy of all true lovers of their species.

In the debate which took place in the House of Commons in 1838, on a motion by Sir Stratford Canning for an inquiry whether Messrs. Bell and Co. were entitled to indemnity for the seizure and confiscation of the ship Vixen while trading on the coast of Circassia, the following observations were made on the right of sovereignty over that country.

Dr. Lushington, who opened the debate on the ministerial side, said:

"The right of Turkey to Circassia was acknowledged in 1783 by Russia, and surely Russia was justified in taking by the treaty of Adrianople, (in 1829,) a cession of her right to that country."

Lord Palmerston again said: "Mr. Bell, not content with violating the regulations, (supposed Custom-house regulations by Russia,) and as it were to make sure of a seizure, takes a cargo of salt, which is *prohibited by Russia* in any port of Circassia. So determined is he to have two strings to his bow, that first he takes a cargo into a port where none is allowed to be taken; and secondly, he takes

a cargo which is not allowed to be taken into any port of the *Russian dominions* there at all."

And in his answer to the despatch of Count Nesselrode, which justified the seizure on the exact grounds here stated by the noble lord, his lordship expresses the satisfaction of her Majesty's Government with that explanation, and that they have no further demand to make in regard to the seizure of the Vixen.

Lord John Russell, the last member of the House who spoke in defence of the seizure, said:

"This port, Soudjuk-kale, apparently did not belong to Russia until the year 1783. Up to that period the fact was acknowledged that it belonged to Turkey in the map put forth by the Russian authorities, and this evening alluded to by the right honourable gentleman Sir Stratford Canning. In that map it is true that a great part of Circassia was laid down *as belonging to independent tribes.* But three of the places at that time *so laid down as belonging to Turkey*, were, by the subsequent treaty of Adrianople, transferred by name to Russia. These places were Soudjuk-kale, Poti, and Anapa. They were named specially in the treaty, and thence has arisen a claim on the part of Russia that the whole of that territory which had belonged to Turkey belongs since to her, and has been confirmed to and comes under her dominion."

From these extracts, it will be seen that the several speakers assume that Turkey had at one time a right of sovereignty over Circassia, which has been since transferred by her to Russia.

Lord John Russell puts the right and the transference of it on rather an equivocal footing; and the noble lord states the matter with that diffidence which the real state of it fully called for. But Dr. Lushington articulately and substantively, and Lord Palmerston inferentially, as if the matter were so plain as not to require assertion, and therefore the more mischievously, distinctly speaks

of *Russian dominion* in Circassia, and of articles having been prohibited by Russia to be imported into that country —a prohibition which is in itself an act of sovereignty.

There cannot, however, be anything more erroneous than the notion that the Sublime Porte ever at any time possessed a right of sovereignty over Circassia; and, as the passages quoted from the speeches of persons who might be expected to have accurate information upon the subject display complete misconception, it may, without offence, be presumed that the British public are still less accurately informed; a little information, therefore, will not be unacceptable to the reader disposed to judge for himself.

Without going back into the remote history of these remote regions, I shall confine myself to the treaties made between Turkey, who is supposed to have had the *ancient*, and Russia, who is alleged to have the *present*, right of sovereignty over Circassia; because in these treaties these two powers, Russia and Turkey, speak most unequivocally to the point, and preclude the necessity of any more ancient authority.

Before doing so, however, it is proper to observe that the religion professed by the greater part of the inhabitants of Circassia, indeed the dominant or state-religion of that country, is Islamism, and that the inhabitants, as do those of all other Mohammedan countries, acknowledge the Grand Sultan of Constantinople to be the head of their religion: that the most efficient means of enlisting the energies of the inhabitants of Mohammedan countries in struggles with Christian countries, has ever been to give their wars a religious character, to hold them out as being in defence of the true religion, and to call into operation the injunction of the Prophet for the destruction of infidels and heretics: and that the Circassians, in all their struggles with Russia, which have been neither few nor of short continuance, have from time to time applied to the Sultan for protection and assistance as the head of their common religion.

To make this assistance more available, and to secure the

defence of their frontier by the maintenance of fortified places, for which the Circassian desultory tactics are no way fitted, the Circassians at one period gave to the Sultan the possession of the fort of Anapa, not in right of sovereignty, but as a mere *point-d'appui* in the defence of the country against Russian invasion; as, in a more familiar instance, the fort of St. Sebastian was given by the Spanish government to that of Great Britain during the late civil war in Spain.

With these preliminary observations, let the treaties speak for themselves, and show whether Turkey had, and still more whether Russia has, *de jure*, as notoriously she has not had, and still has not *de facto*, any right of sovereignty over Circassia.

In 1774, Russia and Turkey, with the view of terminating a war which had been carried on between them with various success, entered into the treaty of Kutshûk Kaynarji.

The third article of that treaty is in these terms:—"All the Tatar people, those of the Crimea, of Bugiuc, of the Cuban, of Yedissan, of Giambuiluc, of Sedicul, without any exception, shall be recognised mutually by the two empires as *free nations, entirely independent of any foreign power*, but as being under the immediate government of their own khan, of the race of Ginghis-khan, elected and confirmed by the general accord and consent of the Tatar people, who shall govern them according to their ancient laws and customs, *without ever rendering any account whatsoever to any foreign power;* consequently the Ottoman Porte shall not interfere in any way, neither in the election or instalment of the aforesaid khan, nor in his affairs domestic, political, civil, or internal; but on the contrary shall acknowledge and consider the said Tatar nation in its political and civil relations as on the same footing as other powers, *which govern of themselves*, and *depend on God only*. And in regard to the ceremonies of religion, as they are identically the same as those of Mussulmans, and as his

Highness the Sultan is the supreme Caliph of Mohammedism, they shall be regulated according to the precepts of their religion, without compromising, however, their political and civil liberty *. Russia restores to this Tatar nation (with the exception of the fortresses of Kertsch and Jenicale, with their districts and harbours, [situated in the Crimea,] which Russia retains to herself), all the towns, fortresses, dwelling-places, lands, and harbours, which the Russian armies have conquered in the Crimea and in the Cuban, the territory between the rivers Berda, Conschiwode, &c. . . . And the Sublime Porte engages

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* *Translation of an Extract from Marten's "Recueil de Traités," vol.* ii., *page* 321, *illustrative of the spiritual supremacy of the Sultan of Turkey over foreign Potentates of the Mussulman faith.*

"By an edict of the Empress of Russia, dated the $\frac{18}{29}$th March 1775, which fixes the day for offering thanks to God for the re-establishment of peace, we find that the ratifications were exchanged at Constantinople, on the $\frac{3}{14}$th January 1775, between the Russian Chargé-d'Affaires, Colonel Petersen, and the Grand Vizier in person.

"At the time of this exchange, the Plenipotentiaries of the two Powers signed an act relating to the Crimea, which, according to the author of the work, '*Geschichte und Ursachen*,' &c., is of the following tenor:—

"'Immediately after his installation, the new Khan shall send a report thereof both to the Court of Petersburg and to the Porte; and the Grand Signior shall be held bound to acknowledge him in conformity with this report, and to transmit him the sable pelisse, turban, and sabre. Prayers shall then be offered in all mosks, for the welfare of the Turkish Emperor, and the coin which shall be struck shall bear his name. The Kadis, or Judges, shall be confirmed by the 'Kadileskiers' at Constantinople; yet with the express understanding that the Porte shall not on this account dare to interfere in the least in regard to the government of the Crimea or its independence. For since the administration of justice among the Ottomans is combined in the closest manner with the spiritual government, this shall only, in accordance with the Treaty concluded, reserve to the Grand Signior the supremacy in spiritual matters. His Highness, as successor of the Caliphs, shall retain the right, in regard to the newly-elected Khan, to admit him as a professor of the Mohammedan religion, and to install him as a Judge, which constitutes him at the same time a minister of religion. All these considerations refer only to spiritual government, and have no allusion whatever to the political constitution or the administration of the civil affairs of the Crimea.'"

also reciprocally to renounce *all right whatever* which it may have over the fortresses, towns, habitations, and everything else in the Crimea, *the Cuban*, and in the Island of Taman, and engages never to send into these places any garrison or armed force, restoring these states to the Tatars in the same manner as the Court of Russia restores them—that is to say in *full and true possession*, and *direct* and *independent government* and *sovereignty*.

"In like manner the Sublime Porte engages and promises solemnly not to introduce or maintain for the future any garrison or armed force in the said towns, fortresses, lands, and habitations, nor to introduce into the interior of these states any governor or military officer of any denomination whatever; but to leave all the Tatars in the same perfect liberty and independence as the empire of Russia does."

The only remark which it seems necessary to make in regard to this treaty is, that by reference to the maps it will be seen, that the river Kûban rises a good deal to the southward of where it discharges itself into the Black Sea, and that throughout nearly the half of its course it runs in an oblique direction from south-east to south-west, and then in a direction from east to west—that Circassia is the country lying between the Kûban and the Black Sea—and that Circassia, together with the extensive district lying along the north bank of the Kûban, have been indiscriminately called "The Kûban."

By this treaty of 1774, then, the Tatars of Kûban—embracing under that appellation a portion at least of the inhabitants of Circassia—are to be recognised as a free people, "independent of any foreign power;" and the whole Tatar nation in its political and civil relations is to be considered as on the same footing "as other powers which govern of themselves, and depend on God only."

It is true that the treaty says, that the Khan of the Crimea shall reign over this nation, but it does so narra-

tively, and not as assuming a right or affecting to put him in that position, and therefore it is immaterial for the present inquiry whether this statement was correct or not. But it may be as well, nevertheless, before leaving this part of the subject, to say that this statement in the treaty proceeded from ignorance of the situation of the Tatar nation.

The Khan of the Crimea had sovereignty over the Crimea, the Isle of Taman, and the Tatar inhabitants of that part of the Kûban district situated on the north bank of the river of that name, but over Circassia he neither had nor ever pretended to have any right of dominion.

In 1779, what was called an Explanatory Convention was made between Russia and Turkey. This convention sets out with a preliminary statement in these terms:—

"Since the conclusion of the treaty of eternal peace between the empire of all the Russias and the Ottoman Porte, at Kaynardgi of the 10th July 1774, and of the Hegira 1188, there have arisen upon some of the articles of that treaty, and particularly by reason of the transformation of the Tatars of the Crimea and others into a free and independent power, subject to God alone, several disputes and misunderstandings, which have gone so far as to deprive the respective subjects of the fruits of peace, quietness, and security.

"In order to remove and put an end once for all to inconveniences so disagreeable, which may occasion discord and hostilities between the two powers, it is mutually and amicably agreed by the Plenipotentiaries of the two empires, furnished with powers to that effect, to enter upon fresh negotiation at Constantinople, with the simple intention of clearing up and explaining doubts, without infringing or in any way altering the said treaty of Kaynardgi."

The 1st article of this Convention is—

"The treaty of eternal peace of Kaynardgi, together

with its two separate articles, is confirmed by this Convention in all its force, and in every point without exception, each according to its literal meaning, as if the said treaty had been inserted here word for word in its whole extent, with the exception of those articles which are precisely and articulately pointed out and explained in the articles of the present Convention."

The 2nd article is—

"In order to render more clear and precise the meaning of the 3rd article of the treaty of Kaynardgi, the Emperor of Russia, in consideration of the friendship which exists between the two empires, and in complaisance to the Sublime Porte, consents that the Khans of the Tatars, after their election and elevation to that dignity by the free and unanimous vote of the Tatars, may send to the Sublime Porte, as well on their own part as on that of the people whom they are to govern, deputies with Mahzars conceived in such terms as shall be fixed to serve once for all. In which Mahzars shall be expressed the acknowledgment of the Supreme Caliphate of the Mohammedan religion in the person of his Highness the Grand Signior, and his spiritual benediction shall be asked, as well for the Khan as for the Tatar nation, by the sending of a letter of blessing *consistent with the dignity of a free and independent sovereign* professing the same religion as the Ottomans.

"The Imperial Court of Russia, having regard to its friendship and goodwill towards the Ottoman Porte, promises also, not to offer any disturbance to what may be indispensably necessary or relate to the unity of its religion. And the Sublime Porte, on the other hand, obliges itself, and promises solemnly, not in any manner, nor under any pretext of spiritual commission or influence, *to disturb or offer any constraint to the civil and political power* of the Tatar Khans, which belongs to them in quality of sovereigns, governing their estates in temporal respects, without account to any power on earth.

"The Sublime Porte having *already renounced*, by the peace of Kaynardgi, *all its temporal rights over all the Tatar hordes, tribes, and races, she engages again of new in the present Convention, never to renew them under any pretext whatever*, but to acknowledge and consider these people as a free and independent nation, according to the 3rd article of the above-mentioned treaty."

The Tatars, those living in Circassia being among the number, are in this treaty of 1779 articulately acknowledged to be a free and independent people, and Turkey engages never to renew her temporal rights over them—and they are so declared, not as of the creation, either of Russia or of Turkey, but as of their own right restored. If this were otherwise doubtful, it is made evident by the terms of the 5th article of the treaty of 1779, in which the court of Russia promises to use its "good offices" with the Khan of the Tatars to induce him to cede to Turkey certain parts of the territory of Oczacow—terms which could never be used by a sovereign in speaking of a subject.

Four years only elapsed before the Empress of Russia, under the pretext of avenging an insult committed against the Khan of the Crimea by the Governor of the Island of Taman, marched an army into the Crimea, and with unexampled fraud and duplicity deposed the khan himself, carried him away into Russia, and put an end to his independent sovereignty.

To justify this step to the world, the Empress published a manifesto on the 8th April 1781, which will be found in the Annual Register of that year, and in the 3rd volume of Marten's Collection of Treaties, but which is greatly too long for insertion here.

This manifesto winds up in these terms: "Animated therefore with a sincere desire of confirming, establishing, and maintaining the last peace concluded with the Porte, by preventing the continual disputes which the affairs of the Crimea produced; our duty to ourself, and the preservation

of the security of our empire, equally demand our taking the firm resolution to put an end, once for all, to the troubles *in the Crimea;* and for this purpose we annex to our empire the peninsula of Crimea, the island of Taman, and *all the Kûban*, as a just indemnification for the losses sustained, and the expenses we have been obliged to incur in maintaining the peace and welfare of these territories."

The prologue to these words by which Her Majesty of Russia proclaimed her having deposed a sovereign whom she had but four years before acknowledged to be for ever free and independent, owing an account to God alone, is a curious mixture of unprincipled selfishness and affected interest for the welfare of the inhabitants of the country thus appropriated; but the main ground on which the appropriation is justified is that of right obtained through previous conquest.

To inquire how far this step was justified by right of conquest, would lead to a much longer investigation than would be convenient here, and is foreign to the present purpose. It is sufficient to observe that no such right ever existed, in regard at least to that part of the Kûban district lying between that river and the Black Sea, and forming a portion of Circassia; the best proof of this is, that although the Kûban was by this manifesto declared to be annexed to the Russian empire, Circassia is at this day, and has been ever since the date of that document, as free and as independent as Catherine in her treaties of 1774 and 1779 had herself declared it to be.

It is no doubt too true that if Russia had been as able *de facto* to annex Circassia, or the Kûban as she calls it, to her empire, as to declare upon paper that she did so, it would be fruitless to dwell on the iniquity of such a proceeding, or to attempt any argument at this time of day to show that the country was not hers. But a bare declaration by the sovereign of one country that he annexes another to his dominions without being able to do it in fact, leaves the

right of sovereignty just as it was before, in whomsoever it had previously rested.

This is so obvious, that no one has attempted to found any right in Russia to Circassia upon this manifesto of Catherine. But the matter is put at rest, even as to the intentions of Russia in her manifesto, by the terms of another treaty which was concluded between her and Turkey at Constantinople on the 28th December 1783.

The 2nd article of this treaty says; "The imperial court of Russia will never avail itself of the rights which the Khans of the Tatars had formed over the territory of the fortress of *Soudjak-calessi*, and therefore she acknowledges it to belong to the Porte in entire sovereignty."

The 3rd article says; "*In admitting the river Kûban to be the frontier in the Kûban, the said court of Russia renounces at the same time all the Tatar nations* WHO ARE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT RIVER, *that is to say*, BETWEEN IT AND THE BLACK SEA."

It is difficult to understand upon what ground the court of Russia, while disclaiming the assertion of the rights which the *Khans of the Tatars* had formed over the territory of *the fortress of Sûjûk-kaleh*, could pretend to acknowledge the right of sovereignty of it to belong to the *Porte*, unless by supposing that these expressions had been used from the circumstance that Turkey was in *de facto* occupation of that fortress, as before observed, as the protectress of the country, though not in any respect or degree its sovereign.

But at all events the 3rd article of this treaty in most express terms saves the rights of the *Tatar people* to the country between the Kûban and the Black Sea, and that country is Circassia; and no mention whatever is made of any right in Turkey to any part of it, with the exception of "the territory of the fortress of Sûjûk-kaleh;" the acknowledgment of such a right to that territory being open to the observation that it rested on no stronger ground than the verbal

assertion of Russia. Where then did Dr. Lushington find that "the right of Turkey to *Circassia* was acknowledged in 1783?"

The next treaty in the order of time is that of Adrianople, concluded in 1829. It would encumber the present statement too much to show how the war, which this treaty terminated, was almost openly sought for by Russia, in contempt of her obligations to Great Britain and France, as co-parties with her to the treaty of London of 1827, a treaty whose object was the pacification of Greece alone; all the three powers, Britain, France, and Russia, solemnly abjuring any intention of territorial acquisition, or exclusive advantage.

It will be sufficient to say, that Russia at first proposed to Great Britain and France that she should lead her armies into Turkey and dictate the pacification of Greece under the walls of Constantinople. That was politely refused by these two powers. Russia then somewhat injudiciously disclosed her secret wishes and motives, so far as to declare, upon this refusal, that she would judge for herself as to the proper means for effecting the objects of the treaty of London; rather plainly hinting that she would use force without permission. Russia was obliged to retract this declaration. Failing of her object in this form, she gained it in substance in another. She published a manifesto in which she alleged a variety of grounds of complaint against Turkey, and under the pretext of these, she marched her armies into Turkey, having previously repeated to the courts of Great Britain and France the abjuration of any intention of territorial aggrandisement or exclusive advantage, which abjuration had been made one of the articles of the treaty of London.

Most of the grounds of complaint thus put forward had existed previous to the treaty of London, while those which did not, arose out of the proceedings of the three powers under that treaty; they were therefore subjects of complaint common to France and Great Britain as well as Russia, and called for a common and united remedy.

Neither Britain nor France interfered to insist on united action, and Russia advanced with one almost uninterrupted course of success to Adrianople, where her further progress to Constantinople was at last stopped by the interposition of Great Britain and France, followed by the treaty of Adrianople, signed on the 2-14th of September, 1829.

The 4th article of that treaty alone relates to the present subject, and is in these terms:

"Georgia, Immeritia, Mingrelia, Gouriel, and many other provinces of the Caucasus, having been annexed for many years and in perpetuity to the Russian empire, and that empire having besides, by the treaty concluded with Persia at Tourcomantchai on the 10th February 1828, acquired the Khanats of Erivan and Nakhitchévan, the two high contracting powers recognise the necessity of establishing between their two respective states, on the whole of that line, a frontier well determined, and such as may prevent all future discussion. They have also taken into consideration the proper means of opposing insurmountable obstacles to the incursions and robberies which the neighbouring people have hitherto practised, and which have so often compromised the connexions of peace and good neighbourhood between the two empires.

"In consequence, it has been determined to recognise, henceforth, as the frontier between the states of the empire of Russia and those of the Sublime Porte in Asia, the line which, following the actual limits of Gouriel to the Black Sea, ascends towards the borders of Immeritia and thence in the straightest direction to the point of the junction of the frontiers of the Pashaliks of Akhaltzik and Kars with those of Georgia, leaving in this way to the north, and within this line, the town of Akhaltzik and the fort of Akhalkalaki, at a distance of not less than two hours.

"All the countries to the south and west of this line of demarcation towards the Pashaliks of Kars and Trebizond, with the greater part of the Pashalik of Akhaltzik, will remain in perpetuity under the dominion of the Sublime

Porte; whilst those which are situated to the north and east of the said line towards Georgia, Immeritia, and Gouriel, as well as all the littoral of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Kûban to the Port of St. Nicholas inclusively, shall remain in perpetuity under the dominion of the empire of Russia."

It will puzzle the reader who is not familiar with the geography of the districts referred to in this article, and the history of the gradual encroachments which Russia had been making on the territories of Persia and Turkey in these quarters, to understand what is accomplished by this article of the treaty of Adrianople. And it will puzzle him still more perhaps, when he is told that it is simply to accomplish upon paper a simulate delivery of *the whole of Circassia* to the tender-mercies of the court of Russia, by the words, "as well as all the littoral of the Black Sea," &c.

By reference to the description given of Circassia in a preceding part of this paper, as being (in part) the country lying between the Black Sea and the oblique line which the course of the river Kûban describes, the reader may discover how this article of the treaty of Adrianople accomplishes the delivery of that country to Russia.

It is not extravagant, however, to assert that the mystification with which Russia intended to cover over the cession to her by Turkey of a country which Turkey never had in her possession to cede—by long-winded provisions about boundaries between countries, the boundaries of which had been long ascertained and formed no part of the cause of quarrel which this treaty was intended to terminate—had its full effect upon Lord John Russell. Lord Palmerston certainly seems to have comprehended how the matter stood; for he, in the passage of his speech formerly quoted, speaks of Circassia as a Russian dominion. But Doctor Lushington and Lord John Russell appear to have been profoundly ignorant of the real position of this country, as between it and Russia and Turkey.

The Doctor said: "The right of Turkey to Circassia was

acknowledged by the treaty of 1783, and surely Russia was justified in taking by the treaty of Adrianople a cession of her right to that country."

But the reader will have perceived that the acknowledgment in 1783 related only to the fortress of Sûjûk-kaleh, and even confined as it was to this fort, it was, as before observed, subject to the inquiry how, embodying as it did an acknowledgment of the rights of the khans of the Tatars over that fortress, it could at the same time acknowledge that this right was vested in the Porte.

But, waiving that inquiry, as there was indubitably no acknowledgment in 1783 of the right of Turkey to Circassia, and as such acknowledgment was the foundation of Dr. Lushington's argument for the right of Russia to receive the country from Turkey, the foundation being gone the superstructure must follow.

Lord John Russell's observations again, considering the clearness of that noble lord's understanding, are a singular jumble. In one sentence Circassia is spoken of as having belonged to independent tribes—and in the very next as having at the same time belonged to Turkey.

He says, "In that map" (the Russian map) "it is true that a great part of Circassia was laid down as belonging to independent tribes. But three of the places at that time so laid down as belonging to Turkey, were by the subsequent treaty of Adrianople transferred by name to Russia." And, to put the matter beyond all doubt, his lordship goes on: "These places were Sûjûk-kaleh, Poti, and Anapa. They were named specially in the treaty, and thence has arisen a claim on the part of Russia, that the whole of that territory which had belonged to Turkey, belongs since to her, and has been confirmed to and comes under her dominion."

Without stopping to point out the inconsistency of his lordship in using the terms "laid down as belonging to independent tribes," and "laid down as belonging to Turkey," as if they were convertible to express one and the

same thing; it appears to have been his lordship's understanding, that Russia's claim to Circassia was founded on a special cession by name in the treaty of Adrianople of the fortresses of Sûjûk-kaleh, Poti, and Anapa.

What then must become of that claim supposing this cession to be its foundation, if no such cession exist? Yet such is the fact—from the beginning to the end of the treaty of Adrianople—so far from Sûjûk-kaleh, Poti, and Anapa, being specially ceded by name, their names do not once occur for any purpose whatever, whether of cession or otherwise.

Not only is there no mention of these forts, but there is no mention of any name by which any part of Circassia, and still less the whole of that country, is known; and it is not an unfair inference to suppose, that when Lord John Russell made the speech alluded to, in the House of Commons, he was not, if he is even yet, aware of the exact terms in which the cession of Circassia by Turkey to Russia is conceived, if cession it can be called, where one gives what he never had to give.

If Russia have any right to any part of Circassia by virtue of the treaty of Adrianople, it is founded alone on these words, "as well as all the *littoral* of the Black Sea from the mouth of the Kûban to the port of St. Nicholas, inclusive."

Now, considering that the countries spoken of before these words "as well as" had, as indeed the treaty sets out with stating, been long annexed to the Russian empire, (how brought about would make a curious inquiry,) and that there was no dispute about them; while, on the contrary, the country which follows these words, expressed thus periphrastically, "the littoral of the Black Sea," had cost; at the very time of this treaty was costing, and has since cost Russia much blood and treasure, in fruitless efforts to subdue it to her dominion, it is somewhat singular that, "all the littoral of the Black Sea," instead of being put in the foreground as the principal object of negotiation, is

introduced with an "as well as:" unless indeed it were intended by that, and the unintelligible and ingeniously ambiguous term "littoral of the Black Sea," to gain a written title to Circassia without appearing to have done so.

Accordingly, Lord John Russell imagining that Russia must have a right to what she insists upon so strenuously, had cast about to find where the right existed; was unable to trace it in the treaty of Adrianople; and stumbling upon, or having thrown in his way, a very different document, the manifesto of Russia published immediately after the treaty, he fancied he had there got the object of his search, and so he delivered himself of his discovery with that authority and that implicitness of belief, as regards his hearers, which are due to his exalted station, and the respectability and integrity of his character.

In the manifesto published by the Emperor of Russia after the conclusion of the treaty of Adrianople, there is this passage: "The security of our frontiers, especially on the Asiatic side, is for ever guaranteed by the incorporation with the empire of the fortresses of Anapa, Poti, Akhaltzik, Atzkour, and Akhalkalaki."

It is this passage which led Lord Russell to say, that Anapa and Poti (how he added Sûjûk-kaleh is not so evident) had been ceded by that treaty by name, when their names never once occurred in the treaty.

And this passage of the manifesto is itself curious enough. The emperor professes to congratulate his subjects on the security of the frontier being obtained by the cession of Anapa, which is on the northern frontier of Circassia, toward Russia; and of Poti, Akhaltzik, Atzkour, and Akhalkalaki, which are on the southern frontier of Mingrelia and Immeritia, (countries to the south of Circassia), toward the provinces of Turkey in Asia Minor. Unless therefore it was meant that the cession of "all the littoral of the Black Sea between the Kûban and the port of St. Nicholas," was *vox et prœterea nihil*, how

could the frontier be said to be secured by the cession of Anapa? If all the littoral was by the treaty become part of the dominion of Russia, that fort was not on the Russian frontier, but all the length of that littoral—that is to say, all the length of Circassia, Mingrelia, and Immeritia, or some hundred miles within it.

The paragraph of the manifesto in which the security of the frontier by the cession of these forts is mentioned, sets out in these terms: "In these days of combat and glory, constantly free from all desire of conquest, we have never ceased to invite the Porte to concur in re-establishing harmony between the two empires."

In congratulating his subjects upon the security obtained to their frontier by the cession of Anapa, was it intended by Russia to disclaim, or at least not to pretend, any right to Circassia by virtue of the cession of "all the littoral of the Black Sea"? In such case it would be very appropriate to say, that the frontier was secured by the incorporation of Anapa with the empire, because then it truly would be a frontier fortress,—a fortress on the southern frontier of Russia in these parts, and on the *northern* frontier of Circassia.

Or was it intended by this congratulation as to the security of the frontier, merely to avoid giving the lie in the end of the paragraph to the impudent boast in the beginning of it, about being "constantly free from all desire of conquest," and to bamboozle Lord John Russell, and such as, like him, should be unacquainted with the position of countries; but by no means to disclaim a right to Circassia by the cession of the littoral of the Black Sea? In that case, it would be intelligible enough, how, and also why, Russia was guilty of otherwise such an apparent absurdity as to speak of Anapa securing a frontier, which was some hundreds of miles to the southward of its position.

Either of these alternatives Russia must choose in explaining this manifesto. But however this may be, it must

be plain to every one, that there could not be a more palpable miscarriage than for Lord John Russell to suppose that the forts of Sûjûk-kale, Poti, and Anapa, were ceded by Turkey to Russia specially by name in the treaty of Adrianople, and that thence had arisen a claim on the part of Russia to the whole of "that territory;" for, in the first place, as already shown, not one of the three names occurs in the treaty from the beginning to the end of it; and in the next place, Poti is not in Circassia, (as his Lordship must have supposed when speaking of "that territory," Circassia being the territory in discussion,) but in Mingrelia having part of that country and all the coast of the Azras between it and Circassia.

But it may be said, if the "littoral of the Black Sea" is a more comprehensive term than those on which Lord John Russell erroneously founded, and will better embrace all Circassia, what matters his mistake? Not much certainly, except to show the readiness with which a defence of Russia was entered upon without previous inquiry as to the ground upon which it *could*, and with still less as to the justice upon which it *ought*, to be founded.

Undoubtedly, the rights of Russia, of Turkey, and still more pre-eminently those of the Circassians, remain as they were, notwithstanding any errors or misapprehensions in regard to them on the part of our senators, and with a short summary of what they are this paper shall close.

Circassia, not to speak of the other districts lying like it in the Isthmus, between the Black and the Caspian seas, has been inhabited beyond history by independent tribes, having no common ruler, but acknowledging a supremacy of their religion in the Grand Signior, and by reason of this connexion with the Porte receiving, as occasion required, against those who were enemies to their common religion, such military assistance and protection as the Porte could afford to give.

By the treaty between Russia and Turkey in 1774, con-

firmed as it was by the convention of 1779, the freedom and independence of these tribes was recognised in the most full and absolute terms—the object of doing so being apparently to have the territory of these tribes as neutral ground between the two empires.

By the treaty of 1783, Russia,—having most nefariously, in the beginning of that year, seized upon the Crimea and the country on the north of the Kûban,—takes that river for her frontier, and expressly abjures any right to Circassia, or the country to the south of that river,—describing it in the words of the treaty as lying "between it, (the river,) and the Black Sea,"—and does not, either by asserting a right in herself or imputing such right to Turkey, in the slightest degree detract from or impinge upon the declaration of the freedom and independence of Circassia, which both she and Turkey had made in the solemn and unequivocal terms of the treaty of 1774 and the explanatory convention of 1779; except in so far as she disclaimed any intention of insisting upon the rights of the khans of the Crimea, (in whose shoes she had placed herself,) over "the territory of the fortress of Soudjak-calessi," and acknowledged it to belong to the Porte in entire sovereignty.

At the date of the treaty of Adrianople, so far from Russia having, as stated by Dr. Lushington, acknowledged the right of Turkey to Circassia, she had, on the contrary, (in 1783,) acknowledged the perfect freedom of that country, and its "independence of any foreign power whatever."

But here ends the history of Russia's good faith in respect of Circassia, so far as regards its appearance upon the face of treaties at least; for it is certain and indisputable, that in taking from Turkey, by the treaty of Adrianople, a cession of all the littoral of the Black Sea, from the mouth of the Kûban to the port of St. Nicholas, she did, in words, take from Turkey a cession of Circassia; and so far as

Turkey may at any future time pretend against Russia a title to that country, this treaty will be a good answer to any such claim.

But in a question between Russia and the Circassians as to whether the latter are or are not by this treaty put under the dominion of Russia, the treaty is not worth the paper it is written upon.

After the statement that has been given, it is too plain to require argument that the independence of Circassia remains as it existed previous to the treaty of 1774; as it was acknowledged by that treaty, and by the convention of 1779; and as it is untouched by the treaty of 1783. And, with great submission to Dr. Lushington, the independence of the Circassians would be just as unquestionable as it has been stated to be, even although Russia had in the treaty of 1783 acknowledged the right of Turkey to abrogate it.

The acknowledgment by Russia of a right of territory in Turkey or any other sovereign power without such right having any existence in fact, could not by any means or in any degree justify Russia in taking a cession of the territory as in a question between her and the inhabitants of the country:—what Russia and Turkey might transact between themselves, by treaty or otherwise, in regard to the territory of Circassia, could never affect the rights of the inhabitants of that country, so long as they were not the subjects, as they never have been, and are not likely we hope ever to be, the subjects of either of these empires.

If the Doctor maintain the negative of this, he must be prepared likewise to maintain that, if Russia should in the year 1840 acknowledge in France a right to Great Britain, Russia would be "justified" in 1850 in taking a cession of that right, and that he, the Doctor, or any of his fellow-countrymen, questioning with swords in their hands the exercise of that cession, would be justly liable to the character of rebels, and to the treatment which Russia is inflicting upon the Circassians.

It is a singular doctrine to come from the mouth of such a disciple of liberty; that the national affections and prejudices of a free and independent people are to be the subject of sport, or barter, (thimble-rig) or what you will, of two foreign despots.

But perhaps the most conclusive, as it is the most obvious, answer to any notion of a right of sovereignty over Circassia having existed in Turkey, which she could give over to Russia, is the notorious fact of the sale of Circassians by their own parents into slavery to the Turks. No doubt these sales are made with the free consent of the parties sold, and more often at their request, for the reasons which will be found in the text; but the religious law of the Turks is most explicit, and most rigidly adhered to, in forbidding the sale or holding of any subject of the Padisha (either Mussulman or Christian) as a slave.

If the Circassians, therefore, were the subjects of Turkey the sale by them of their children as slaves—a practice which has been constantly followed for a period much anterior to any of the treaties to which allusion has been made—would have been a direct, public, and notorious breach of this law, such as has never been known to occur.

And while such is the conclusive proof that no idea of a right of sovereignty over Circassia ever existed in Turkey, the Government of Russia afforded even stronger proof that no such right was admitted on her behalf: for which reason she felt herself at liberty to compete for the good graces of the Circassians by the establishment of factories for trade at Pshat and Ghelinjik, *in rivalry of the Turkish establishment at Anapa.* This undertaking was entered upon about ten years before the treaty of Adrianople, at the suggestion of the Duc de Richelieu, and was carried so far into execution by Messrs. Scassi and De Marigny, the individuals selected for that purpose by the Russian Government *.

* The latter of these gentlemen published a narrative of the whole transaction: an English translation of his book has been published lately by Mr. Murray, and to that publication I beg to refer those who wish to satisfy themselves in regard to the right of sovereignty over Circassia assumed by Russia, as based on a cession from Turkey.

No. XIV.

(Referred to in Vol. I. p. 447, and Vol. II. p. 53.)

SPECIMENS OF THE THREE LANGUAGES OF THE CIRCASSIAN COAST.

	AZRA, Spoken from Mingrelia to Hamish.	ABAZA, Spoken from Hamish to Vardan.	ADIGHE, Spoken from Vardan to Kûban.
Man	Utrûs	Tint	Tzifu
Woman	Pkhûz	Pkheûsh	Shûz
Boy	Aitchun	Mûzû	Savo
Girl	Abhûspa	Pkhedug	Psasu
Horse	Atche	Tche	Shu
Cow	Aûz	Guma	Tshémi
Goat	Aidjma	Wûkû	Pshéni
Sheep	Wassa	Peye	Mehli
Dog	Alla	Uwû	Kha
Cat	Agute	Yetû	Ketu
House	Aûvne	Twia	Une
Tree	Atzla	Wûne	Tshirghi
Water	Adze	Pze	Psu
Fire	Amptsha	Midje	Mazkwa
Earth (land)	Anûif	Aïdza	Jatu
Turkey-corn	Allagwita	Naterf	Naterf
Sea	Amashina	Uishe	Khu
Mountain	Abena	Amzako	Hûskha
River	Abza	Adukwa	Pshiz
Forest	Atwû	Amzako	Mazu
Night	Woka	Shwû	Tsheshi
Day	Amsha	Tshwokha	Mafu
Sun	Amira	Andegha	Tugu
Moon	Amza	Atekha	Mazwu
Star	Aiefa	Azwû	Zawû
God	Answû	Wûba	Ta
Rain	Akuneit	Akwû	Kûshku
Snow	Assû	Zwûdzû	Wusu
Hail	Agh	Peshi	Shki
Wind	Abshû	Tûpza	Dju
Storm	Amishkhe	Zonda	Ozban
Father	Yaba	Rep	Tat
Mother	Lana	Rûne	Nan or Yan
Husband	Apûs	Kwûbje	Tlu
Wife	Pkhûz	Pkûz	Shûz
Brother	Zeisha	Rejekha	Shish
Sister	Zausha	Rejekha	Shupkhû
Son	Sepû	Rewha	Savo
Daughter	Asepkha	Repkha	Psasu
Friend	Hansûp	Reintia	Siblagha
Enemy	Tisaga	Rebaka	Haŧam
Slave	Agrûa	Kadyera	Pshilt
Prince	Akh	Khe	Pshe
Noble	Ambista	Voïshkha	Vork
Tokav	Anekhûa	Wagushe	Thfokwatl

N.B.—The û is intended for the full Italian sound.
u for a slight sound, like the e of *serve*.

No. XV.

(Referred to in Vol. 1. p. 402.)

EXTRACT FROM M. KLAPROTH'S "TABLEAU DU CAUCASE."

"Les recherches auxquelles je me suis livré pour connaître la population de l'isthme Caucasien m'ont fourni le résultat contenu dans le tableau suivant; je crois pouvoir en garantir l'exactitude approximative, puisqu'il est tiré de pièces authentiques.

Tableau de la Population des Pays situés entre la Mer Noire et la Caspienne.

TCHERKESSES.

	FAMILLES OU MAISONS.
1. *Bezlenié*, sur la Laba supérieure, à la sortie des hautes montagnes jusqu'au Khots .	1,600
2. *Moukhoch*, aux pieds des montagnes noires boisées, sur les rivières qui se jettent dans le Yaman-sou	670
3. *Abazekh*, dans les cantons supérieurs où coulent le Pfarzekh, le Psefir, le Pchass et le Pchakh	15,000
4. *Temirgoï* ou *Kemoùr Kwœhé*, confinent avec les Moukhoch et habitent principalement l'Arim	5,100
5. *Bjedoukh*, sur plusieurs rivières que le Kouban reçoit à gauche	850
6. *Hattouhaï* on *Hattikwœhé*, sur les bords du Chag' wacha	460
7. *Chapchikh*, à l'ouest des Bjedoukh, dans les montagnes boisées qui s'étendent jusqu'à Anapa	10,000
8. *Bjana* ou *Jani*, sur l'Atta-koum et dans le voisinage	240

9.	*Adaly*, sur la rive gauche du Kouban à son embouchure, et sur le liman de ce fleuve .	420
10.	*Skhegahaï*, sur le Bougour et ses affluens, tout près et au-dessous d'Anapa . .	950
11.	Tcherkesses de la *grande Kabardah* . .	11,250
12.	Tcherkesses de la *petite Kabardah* . .	4,590
		51,130

ABAZES.

1.	*Alti Kesseh* ou *petite Abaza*, sur le Kouban supérieur	2,328
2.	*Bechilbaï*, sur l'Ouroup . . .	4,500
3.	*Midawi* ou *Madowé*, sur la Laba supérieure .	860
4.	*Barakaï*, sur les Khots et ses affluens, dans les cantons des Kounak-tav et Jighil Boulouko	560
5.	*Kazil beg*, entre les sources de la grande et de la petite Laba, jusqu'à la Mer Noire .	260
6.	*Tchegreh* et *Bugh*, sur la gauche de la Laba .	480
7.	*Toubi* et *Ouboukh*, près de la Chag' wacha et de Pchakh, jusqu'aux montagnes de neige et la Mer Noire	540
8.	*Bsoubbeh*, au sud-ouest des précédens, jusqu'à la Mer Noire et Sokoum-Kalah . .	520
9.	*Natoukhaï*, à l'ouest des Tcherkess Chapchikh, sur les dernières montagnes noires, jusqu'au Mez-kiakh, qui se jette dans la Mer Noire	5,350
10.	*Kouch' hazip Abazi*, ou Abazes qui habitent au-delà des montagnes. Ce sont les tribus Ouboukh, Chachi, Ibsip, Koubikhan, Aratkhovas, Bah et Nalkoupi Madjavi .	38,500
		53,898

NOGAÏ.

Au-delà du Kouban.

1. *Mantsour-oghlou*, sur le Khots . .	450
2. *Nawrouz-aoûl*, sur la Laba inférieure . .	650
3. Hordes qui appartiennent aux descendans des Sulthans de Crimée . . .	180
4. Autres hordes dispersées sur la gauche du Kouban, jusqu'aux bords de la Mer Noire, et sur les bords du Terek et de ses affluens	8,200
	9,480
Ossetes . .	33,915
Mitsdgeghi	35,850
Lesghi, (y compris les Kazi-koumuk 15,000, sur un bras supérieur du Koï-sou). .	138,700
Peuplades Turques et Turcomanes . . .	79,914
Pays Géorgiens	125,000
Tcherkesses	51,130
Abazes	53,898
Nogaï	9,480
	527,887

Je ne pense qu'on puisse compter plus de neuf *individus* par deux maisons; peut-être moins dans les hautes montagnes, et plus dans les vallées inférieures, et dans les plaines de la Géorgie: ce calcul porterait donc le nombre total des habitans de l'isthme Caucasien à 2,375,487."

No. XVI.

(Referred to in Vol. I. page 194.)

LIST OF ANCIENT COINS PROCURED ON THE COAST OF CIRCASSIA.

Copper.

1. Right side of a head; in front a trident. Insc.—BACIΛEΩC · POIMHTAΛKOΥ—(Rhœmetalces, King of the Cimmerian Bosphorus).
   Rev.—M H, within a wreath of laurel leaves.
2. Right side of a head; in front a trident. Insc.—BACIΛEΩC POIMHTAΛKOΥ—(Rhœmetalces, King of the Cimmerian Bosphorus).
   Rev.—M H. A round buckler attached to a shield, between an axe and a sacrificing-knife; on one side a horse's head, on the other something indistinct.
3. Right side of a head.
   Rev. Insc.—ΠANTIKAΠAITΩN (Panticapeum, a town of the Tauric Chersonesus), a tripod, behind a thyrsus.
4. Right side of a head (different from the former one).
   Rev.—ΠANTIKAΠAITΩN—a tripod, behind a thyrsus: to the right, some marks I have not been able to get explained.

Silver.

5. ΓOPΓIΠΠEΩN (Gorgippia, a town in the Cimmerian Bosphorus). A stag running, behind a thyrsus.
   Rev.—Head of Apollo.
6. Right side of a head. Insc.—D. N. CONSTANTIVS. P. F. AVG. (Constantius II., son of Constantine the Great).
   Rev.—VOTIS. XXX MVLTIS XXXX, in a garland: beneath, SIRM.

Gold.

7. Man in armour, crowned, bearing sceptre and globe. Insc.—RVDOL. II. D. G. R. I. S. A. G. H. B. REX. (Rudolphus Secundus, Dei gratia Romanus Imperator semper Augustus; Germaniæ, Hungariæ, Bohemiæ Rex.)

Rev. — His arms and crown. Insc.—ARCHI. AVS. DV. BVR. MA. MO. 1586 (Archidux Austriæ, Dux Burgundiæ, Marchio Moraviæ).

BOTANY.

I hoped to present the lovers of this science with a list of specimens collected with much care during two seasons; but I have now only to beg their sympathy for the loss of the whole of my collection at Constantinople, previously to my return there. A few seeds (among which are those of the species of *Amaranthus* spoken of) alone remain to me.

No. XVII.

(Referred to in Vol. II. page 372.)

ANALYSIS OF WATER OF SULPHUR-SPRINGS IN ABAZAK.

Copy of a letter from Professor Graham, of the University College, London — published by his kind permission.

University College, *August 11th*, 1840.

Dear Sir,—The mineral water from Circassia which you sent to me is sulphureous, and contains a proportion of sulphuretted hydrogen gas, not inferior to the most highly charged sulphureous waters of the west of Europe. It is also decidedly alkaline, from the presence of sulphuret of sodium and carbonate of soda.

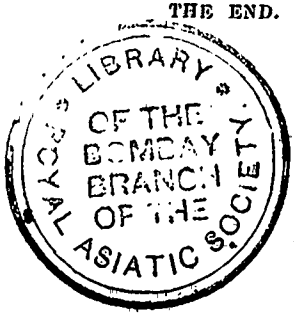
In addition to these constituents, it contains small quantities of a sulphate and chloride; but very little earthy salts. It is a valuable sulphureous water.

I am sorry that the quantity I have for examination is too small to enable me to determine more minutely the proportions of the salts mentioned in this water.

I have the honour to be,
Dear Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) THOS. GRAHAM.

JAS. S. BELL, Esq.

THE END.



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